DC COMICS™

VOLUME THREE

THE NEW TEEN TITANS™

MARV WOLFMAN

GEORGE PÉREZ

ROMEO TANGHAL

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

ALL NEW! 60¢

NO. 19 MAY

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GUEST-STARRING THE WINGED WONDER... HAWKMAN!™

C-846

THEY ARE THE ***BEST*** THERE IS: ***THE CHANGELING,*** SHAPE-SHIFTER SUPREME; ***CYBORG,*** HALF MAN / HALF ROBOT; ***KID FLASH,*** SUPER-SPEEDSTER; ***RAVEN,*** MISTRESS OF MAGIC; ***ROBIN,*** THE TEEN WONDER; ***STARFIRE,*** ALIEN POWERHOUSE; AND ***WONDER GIRL,*** THE AMAZING AMAZON! TOGETHER THEY ARE...

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

CENTRAL PARK...

IT'S BEEN TWO MONTHS SINCE I'VE SPOKEN TO SARAH, AN' I STILL CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO GO DOWN THERE AN' *TALK.*

BEEN FEELIN' SO BLASTED *GUILTY* EVER SINCE THE TERMINATOR *KIDNAPPED* HER.

MAN, I HAVE NO RIGHT LETTIN' SOMEONE SO *INNOCENT* GET HURT JUST 'CAUSE SHE *KNOWS* ME!

MARV WOLFMAN · GEORGE PÉREZ
writer-co-creators · penciller
ROMEO TANGHAL
embellisher
JOHN COSTANZA
letterer
ADRIENNE ROY
colorist
LEN WEIN
editor

1

SHE'S BETTER OFF *WITHOUT* ME MESSIN' UP HER LIFE.

YEAH. SHE'S GOT THOSE *KIDS* TO LOOK AFTER.

SHE'S *HAPPY* WITH 'EM.

NO REASON TO HAVE ME *SCREWING UP* THAT HAPPINESS.

MISS SIMMS, YOU LOOK SO *SAD*. WHAT'S *WRONG*?

JUST *THINKING*, CHARLIE. THAT'S ALL.

ABOUT MR. STONE? WHERE'S HE *BEEN*? I REALLY *MISS* HIM.

SO DO *I*, CHARLIE.

I DON'T KNOW *WHERE* HE'S GONE OFF TO, I'M SORRY TO SAY.

BUT I'D REALLY LIKE HIM *HERE* NOW.

VICTOR STONE, *WHEREVER* YOU ARE, PLEASE COME BACK INTO MY LIFE.

YEAH, BETTER OFF *WITHOUT* ME.

'SIDES, SHE'S PROBABLY FORGOTTEN ALL *ABOUT* ME BY NOW.

YEAH.

SURE.

WINTER'S CHILL COVERS ONE AND ALL...

CALCUTTA, INDIA...

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU *AGAIN*, MR. RAJA, FOR ALLOWING *AMERICANS* TO SEE THIS EXHIBIT OF *INDIAN ARTIFACTS*.

OH, YES, IT IS *OUR* PLEASURE INDEED, MR. HALL.

AMERICANS ARE NOT SO *FAMILIAR* WITH THE HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY OF *MY* COUNTRY AS THEY ARE OF THOSE THINGS *EUROPEAN*.

2

OH, BUT I THINK THEY *WILL* BE WHEN WE'RE *DONE*. THE SHOW BEGINS IN NEW YORK, THEN MOVES TO CHICAGO, MIDWAY CITY, LOS ANGELES AND FINALLY WASHINGTON, D.C.

I BELIEVE MY PEOPLE WILL COME TO APPRECIATE THE *RICHNESS* OF YOUR COUNTRY.

CARTER HALL, CURATOR FOR THE MIDWAY CITY MUSEUM, TIREDLY SLUMPS INTO HIS CUSHIONED SEAT.

THE WORK HERE HAS BEEN LONG AND SOMETIMES FRUSTRATING, BUT HE HAS BEEN SUCCESS-FUL...

...IN BOTH SETTING UP THIS NEW TRAVELLING EXHIBI-TION, AND IN TRYING TO FORGET THAT HIS WIFE SHIERA HAS SEEMINGLY ABANDONED HIM.

NEW YORK STATE CORRECTIONAL PRISON...

ONLY THE MEANEST, TOUGHEST, MOST SAVAGE CRIMINALS ARE SENT HERE.

SUPPOSEDLY THESE MEN WILL BE RELEASED IN TEN TO TWENTY YEARS WHEN THEY WILL NO LONGER SEEK A LIFE OF CRIME.

AND, IF YOU BE-LIEVE THAT, WE HAVE THIS BRIDGE IN BROOKLYN WE'RE JUST DYING TO SELL YOU!

HEY! YOU HEAR THAT *THE RIDDLER* STOLE FIVE MILLION BUCKS FROM RIGHT UNDER THE BATMAN'S NOSE?

THE RIDDLER?

THE RIDDLER?

THAT *DOES* IT! I'VE *HAD* IT!

THAT NO-TALENT, NO-POWERED CRETIN *SUCCEEDS...*

...WHILE I, WHOSE POWER IS SECOND ONLY TO *GREEN LANTERN'S,* HAVE *FAILED* IN MY EVERY CRIMINAL ATTEMPT!

WELL, NOW *DOCTOR LIGHT IS REALLY MAD!*

3

ALL MY LIFE I'VE *FAILED* AT EVERYTHING I'VE EVER *TRIED*.

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT UTTER *HUMILIATION* REALLY IS UNTIL SOMEONE WITH *MY* TALENT--

--IS BESTED BY *THE ATOM*, NO LESS. LORD, THAT TOOK ME *MONTHS* TO LIVE DOWN.

BUT *NO MORE*. I WON'T ALLOW A MANIACAL *SIMPLETON* WHOSE RIDDLES EVEN "*JOE MILLER*" WOULD REJECT BEAT OUT *DOCTOR LIGHT!*

SUDDENLY, I HAVE A REASON TO *LIVE* AGAIN. A REASON TO SEEK OUT *SUCCESS*.

EH? *LIGHT?* WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU *DOING?*

GET *DOWN* FROM THERE, LIGHT!

CERTAINLY, MY GOOD FUZZ.

BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU PEOPLE PAID YOUR *ELECTRIC BILL* LATELY?

BECAUSE, SUDDENLY, *THIS* LIGHT IS *OUT!*

TA TA.

HUNH? WHERE'D HE GO? WHERE'D LIGHT GO?

OHH, THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE MY *HIDE*. FIRST THE *MIRROR MASTER* ESCAPES ME, NOW *THIS*.

WHERE DID DR. LIGHT VANISH TO, THIS BEFUDDLED POLICEMAN ASKS. WELL, WE COULD GIVE YOU A DETAILED SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION OF HOW HE CONVERTED MASS INTO LIGHT WAVES...

...BUT JUST TAKE IT FROM US IN SIMPLER TERMS: DOCTOR LIGHT HAS FLOWN THE COOP!

4

...TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN A HIDDEN LABORATORY SOMEWHERE IN NEW JERSEY...

I COULD HAVE ESCAPED AT *ANY* TIME, BUT I NEVER REALLY SEEMED TO HAVE A *REASON*.

BUT NOW I'VE BEEN GIVEN A *NEW* PURPOSE AND NEW *HOPE*.

AND A NEW *COSTUME*, TOO.

MY SPARE'S ALL CLEANED AND *PRESSED*.

OH, I'LL MAKE THE RIDDLER *EAT* HIS NEXT CONUNDRUM NOW.

ONLY TROUBLE IS, WHAT DO I *DO*?

I'M THROUGH ATTACKING *SUPER-HEROES*. THAT ONLY GETS ME TEN TO TWENTY UPSTATE.

HELLO! NOW WHAT IS *THIS*?

AN EXHIBIT ON INDIAN ARTIFACTS AND MYTHOLOGY, WITH A ROOM HONORING THE GOD *VISHNU*?

NOW, IF *THAT* ISN'T AN OMEN, I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* IS.

NEW WOLFMAN FILM

NEW INDIAN EXHIBIT OPENS AT MUSEUM TOMORROW

AMERICA SITS TODAY

VISHNU COMES FROM THE WORD *VICH*-- OF *LIGHT PENETRATING THE WHOLE UNIVERSE!*

WELL, I HAVE MY *TARGET*, AND SOON I'LL HAVE MY *PRIZE*.

HMMM. I'LL HAVE TO THANK *GIZMO* FOR LEAVING THESE *MINI-JETS* BEHIND. SAVES ON MY *POWER SUPPLY*.

5

AND MEANWHILE, AT THE FAMED NEW YORK MUSEUM...

YOU'VE DONE A MONUMENTAL *JOB*, CARTER. YOU SHOULD BE QUITE *PROUD* OF THIS!

WELL, I'VE CERTAINLY WORKED MY *TAIL* OFF, WILLIS.

I JUST HOPE IT DRAWS A GOOD *CROWD*.

ESPECIALLY FOR *THIS*. IT'S QUITE AN *ENIGMA*, UNLIKE ANYTHING *ELSE* I'VE EVER SEEN.

THE STATUE IS OF *VISHNU* AND HIS *TEN AVATARS*--

--SUPPOSEDLY THE VARIOUS *FORMS* VISHNU TOOK ON HIS COMINGS TO EARTH.

BUT THOSE *CRYSTALS* HE'S HOLDING...

PERFECT CRYSTALS, WILLIS-- BEYOND THE *MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES* OF THE TIME THIS STATUE WAS MADE.

WILLIS DARROW'S HAND REACHES TO TOUCH THE STRANGE STATUE, BUT...

YAHH! MAN, THAT GAVE ME A *SHOCK*. YOU HAVE THIS STATUE *WIRED*, CARTER?

NO. WE'RE USING *HEAT SENSORS* FOR SECURITY. IT HAS PROBABLY STORED UP *STATIC ELECTRICITY*...

...BUT I'LL CHECK IT OUT AGAIN BEFORE WE OPEN.

YES, CARTER, I FEEL THIS WILL BE QUITE A *FEATHER* IN YOUR ALREADY-CROWDED BONNET.

A SIMPLY *REMARKABLE* EXHIBIT.

6

AN OLD TELEVISION SHOW LOCATED IN NEW YORK USED TO STATE THAT "THERE ARE EIGHT MILLION STORIES IN THE NAKED CITY." DOCTOR LIGHT FIRMLY WISHES THAT THIS WASN'T ONE OF THEM...

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC!

I TOLD YOU, DONNA, I DON'T WISH TO *DISCUSS* THIS ANY FURTHER.

AND I'M TELLING *YOU*, KORY, YOU CAN'T LET FRANKLIN'S *DEATH* EAT YOU UP THIS WAY.

IT'S BEEN *TWO MONTHS* NOW.

YOU'VE GOT TO SNAP *OUT* OF IT.

I WAS IN *LOVE* WITH HIM, DONNA. AND THEN HE WAS *KILLED*.

HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO *FORGET* THAT?

I *DON'T*. I SIMPLY WANT YOU TO MOVE ON. FRANKLIN WAS *PART* OF YOUR LIFE, AND THAT WON'T *CHANGE*...

...BUT YOU CAN'T *FIXATE* YOURSELF ON THAT. YOU'VE GOT TO CARRY ON... AND PICK UP THE PIECES OF YOUR *OWN* LIFE.

7

BUT I TRULY *LOVED* HIM. I WANTED TO *MARRY* HIM, AND THEN... THEN... *X'HAL!* I REALLY WANTED TO *DESTROY* HIS KILLER, DONNA.

I WANTED TO SO *BADLY*. I'M SORRY, DONNA, BUT CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I JUST DON'T FEEL *HAPPY* ANY LONGER?

I CAN *UNDERSTAND* THAT, KORY. BUT IF YOU DON'T *DWELL* ON IT, THAT WILL *PASS*.

YOU'VE GOT TO LET YOURSELF *REACH OUT* AGAIN... ALLOW YOURSELF TO *LAUGH* WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT.

AND THERE WILL *BE* THOSE THINGS, KORY. ABSURD LITTLE *SILLY* THINGS.

I JUST DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU CLOSE YOURSELF UP SO *TIGHTLY* THAT YOU WILL NEVER ALLOW YOURSELF TO FEEL *JOY* AGAIN.

LIKE *ME*, DONNA?

AT LEAST KORIAND'R HAS *FELT* LOVE AND HAPPINESS.

STARFIRE HAS *KNOWN* WHAT IT IS LIKE TO CARE AND BE CARED FOR.

SHE HAS EXPERIENCED ALL THOSE EMOTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN *DENIED* ME.

I *HATE* THE TEMPLE AZARATH FOR WHAT THEY DID TO ME.

INSISTING ON *PERFECTION*... REFUSING TO CONDONE *EMOTION*...

RICHARD?

RAVEN, HI. WHAT'S UP? HOW *ARE* YOU?

UHH. ROBIN... EVERYTHING IS *FINE* WITH ME.

REALLY, RAVEN? YOU DON'T *LOOK* FINE.

AND IT DOESN'T TAKE THE WORLD'S GREATEST *DETECTIVE* TO FIGURE OUT THAT YOU'RE *BOTHERED*.

ROBIN, I WOULD PREFER NOT TO *DISCUSS* THIS.

I WOULD RATHER BE *ALONE* NOW.

8

OH, NO YOU *DON'T*. DON'T SLINK OFF AGAIN, RAVEN.

I'VE BEEN *WATCHING* YOU LATELY. PLEASE, TELL ME WHAT'S *WRONG*.

I'M YOUR *FRIEND*.

FRIEND?

T

YES, RICHARD, YOU *ARE* A FRIEND. AND THAT IS WHY I WILL *SPARE* YOU MY PROBLEMS.

REST *WELL*, FRIEND... REST...

UHHHHH

YOU WILL *AWAKEN* ONLY AFTER I AM...

GONE! SHE DID IT *AGAIN*. SHE SLIPPED AWAY.

BLAST IT. ALL I WANTED TO *DO* WAS--

...HELP MYSELF TO THOSE INVALUABLE *VISHNU STATUES*. THEY'RE GOLD, PLATINUM, SILVER... SET WITH PRECIOUS STONES.

THE RIDDLER STOLE *FIVE MILLION*. DOCTOR LIGHT WILL STEAL *FIVE TIMES* THAT.

BTAMM

AND NOW--LIGHT COMES IN MANY FORMS--INCLUDING ONE REFERRED TO AS *LIGHT AMPLIFICATION THROUGH STIMULATED EMISSION OF RADIATION*--OR *LASER* FOR SHORT.

EXPLOSION?

THAT CAME FROM THE WING WITH THE *INDIAN EXHIBIT*.

CARTER HALL

OUT

IN

CARTER HALL RACES THROUGH THE MUSEUM...

9

UNTIL...

OF ALL THE UNEXPECTED...

DOCTOR LIGHT--?

NO TIME TO CALL THE *POLICE*. BESIDES, THEY'D BE *HELPLESS* AGAINST HIS POWER.

FORTUNATELY, I'M *NOT*!

AH, THIS IS A *SNAP*. I DOWN ONE STUPID GUARD AND THESE TREASURES ARE *MINE* FOR THE PICKING.

YES, INDEED. I'VE BEEN MAKING A *MISTAKE* ALL THIS TIME IN TRYING TO CHALLENGE *SUPER-HEROES*.

I SHOULD HAVE BEEN CONTENT WITH MERELY BEING A *THIEF*!

YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN CONTENT REMAINING *BEHIND BARS*, LIGHT.

WHAT...?

BECAUSE THAT WOULD HAVE SAVED ME THE TROUBLE OF *RE-TURNING* YOU THERE.

OH, NO... NO!

HAWKMAN?!? WHY HIM? WHY HIM?

10

WAIT! THIS IS THE *NEW* DOCTOR LIGHT. I'M NOT SCARED OF *HAWKMAN.*

STAND STILL, YOU WINGED BUFFOON. I'M TRYING TO *KILL* YOU!

YOU'RE *ALWAYS* TRYING, LIGHT--

--FORTUNATELY, YOU NEVER *SUCCEED!*

OH, MY FEATHERED FRIEND, THAT WAS *BEFORE.* THIS TIME I *SHALL* SUCCEED.

A HIGHLY CONCENTRATED DOSE OF *STAR-LIGHT* SHOULD PLUCK YOUR FEATHERS!

AND WITH *YOU* DEAD, I CAN GO ON WITH MY *TREASURE HUNT.*

BUT, AS USUAL, DR. LIGHT'S PLANS GO ASTRAY...

...AS HIS BEAMS FILTER THROUGH CENTURIES-OLD CRYSTAL--

...AND INFUSE AGES-OLD STATUARY...

...WHICH GLOWS WITH UNBRIDLED BRILLIANCE.

WHILE...

AMAZING. A *STRAY* SHOT ACTUALLY CAUGHT MY *WINGS.*

THOUGH THIS WILL ONLY PROVE A *MOMENTARY* DELAY.

SKIMMING THROUGH THIS THICK *SNOW DRIFT* WILL PUT OUT MY *FIRE...*

...THEN I'LL RETURN TO PUT OUT *LIGHT!*

I *SUCCEEDED?* OH, YES, OF *COURSE* I HAVE.

NOW, TO GRAB THE LOOT AND *SPLIT* BEFORE THAT FEATHERED FREAK *RETURNS.*

NOISES...

EH--?

HOLY COW

SWAK!

OH, GOD. WHAT DID I DO *NOW?*

TH-THOSE THINGS... THEY'RE THE FIGURES FROM THAT *STATUE*, THE ONE WITH THE *GLASS*.

M-MY LIGHT PASSING THROUGH THE CRYSTAL MUST HAVE *DONE* SOMETHING.

UMM. HI THERE. I *FREED* YOU. THAT SHOULD MAKE YOU MY SLAVES...

SHOULDN'T IT?

I--I DON'T LIKE THE *LOOK* IN THEIR EYES.

I DON'T THINK THEY READ THE SAME *FAIRY TALES* I DID.

KRAK!

GOOD HEAVENS! THOSE THINGS ARE TRYING TO *KILL* ME. WHAT *INGRAT-ITUDE!*

WELL, LET 'EM *TRY*. I'M GETTING *OUT* OF HERE, FAST AS I *CAN*.

12

I GUESS THEY WERE CLOSER TO THE LEGENDS OF *KING TUT*--REACHING OUT TO *KILL* THOSE WHO UNCOVERED HIS TOMB.

WELL, UNLIKE LORD CARNARVAN'S ILL-FATED EXPEDITION, I'VE GOT CERTAIN SPECIAL *POWERS!*

THEY CAN'T HURT DOCTOR LI--

TH-THEY'RE *FOLLOWING ME!*

WHAT DO I DO *NOW?*

HAWKMAN *STILL* HASN'T COME BACK. AND I DOUBT HE COULD *STOP* THOSE THINGS EVEN IF HE DID!

BESIDES, A *LIGHT BULB* SUDDENLY WENT ON IN MY HEAD. I'VE GOT A *BRAINSTORM.*

I'LL BET THE *TITANS* COULD STOP THEM. AND IF *THEY* FAIL... SO WHAT DO *I* CARE IF *THEY'RE* KILLED, TOO?

HMMM. MAYBE I CAN LEAD THOSE CREATURES ON TO DESTROY THE *J.L.A.* AS WELL.

MEANWHILE, IN TITANS' TOWER...

YOU REALLY SHOULD'A *SEEN* HER, VIC. SHE WAS THIS MOUSY-LOOKING *LIBRARIAN...*

THEN SHE LET DOWN HER *HAIR,* TOOK OFF HER *GLASSES...*

AND SHE WAS *STILL* A MOUSY-LOOKING LIBRARIAN, RIGHT?

YEAH. SO I DATED HER *SISTER.* WOTTA *DISH.*

UH, OH, LOGAN... SOMETHING COMIN' THIS WAY, AND *FAST.*

I'M ALERTIN' THE *OTHERS.*

ALERT

INTRUDER IMMINENT

CYBORG'S STEEL-COVERED FINGER SWEEPS ACROSS THE COMPUTER CONTROL BOARD WITH THE EASE OF A PRACTICED PROFESSIONAL...

13

AND, IN ROOMS ALL ACROSS TITANS' TOWER...

INTRUDER ALARM? OUR ENEMIES NEVER GIVE US A MOMENT'S PEACE.

ROBIN!

OH, AND I WAS HAVING SUCH A GOOD DREAM FOR A CHANGE.

WHY MUST I BE DISTURBED NOW?

STARFIRE!

MY MEDITATION IS BROKEN AGAIN!

ONCE MORE VIOLENCE DISTURBS MY INNER PEACE.

RAVEN!

OH, WELL... ONE CHAPTER TO GO.

I'LL FIND OUT WHO KILLED THE BUTLER SOME OTHER TIME.

WONDER GIRL!

THANK GOODNESS CLASS WAS JUST OVER. ONLY TOOK THREE SECONDS TO CROSS TWO THOUSAND MILES.

KID FLASH!

BTRAMM!

WHEW! I MADE IT. I'M IN.

BUT WHERE ARE THE TITANS?

IF THEY'RE OUT SAVING THE WORLD, I'M DONE FOR.

WE'RE HERE, CREEP, AN' YOU'RE STILL DONE FER!

SHAK

WAIT A SECOND! I'M NOT HERE TO FIGHT YOU!

BLAMMM

RIGHT! YOU ALWAYS GO SMASHIN' DOWN WALLS WHEN YOU COME VISITIN'. RIGHT?

14

LIGHT? YOU JERK! YOU COULDN'T DEFEAT US WITH YOUR *FEARSOME FIVE*... WHY ATTACK US *ALONE*?

I DIDN'T. I *DIDN'T*. I *SWEAR* I DIDN'T.

I CAME HERE FOR *HELP*. PLEASE, *LISTEN* TO ME.

FORGET IT, LIGHT. YOU'D SELL OUT YOUR OWN *MOTHER* FOR A *NICKEL*.

NO I *WOULDN'T*. NOT FOR A *NICKEL*. PLEASE, THEY'RE *AFTER* ME.

WELL, WHOEVER '*THEY*' ARE, THEY PROBABLY HAVE A GOOD *REASON*!

NO, *NO*-- JUST LOOK *OUTSIDE*. YOU'LL SEE WHAT I *MEAN*.

I DO NOT SENSE ANY *LIES*, ROBIN. HE IS GENUINELY *TERRIFIED*.

WELL, FROM THE J.L.A. RECORDS WE'VE GONE OVER, LIGHT'S ALWAYS RUNNING *SCARED*.

STILL, IT DOESN'T HURT TO *CHECK*. CHANGELING...?

YEAH, YEAH, I *KNOW*. DO A *RECON JOB*, RIGHT?

YOU NEVER SEND *WONDY*. NEVER SEND *STARFIRE*. ALWAYS THE *CHANGELING*.

I HATE THIS!

HURRY, GAR!

WHY DON'T WE RECRUIT SOME GOOFY *FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD* TO DO THIS SORTA STUFF?

BAH!

GRUMBLING, THE CHANGELING LEAVES--

--ONLY TO RETURN A MOMENT LATER, WHEN...

UH... GUYS, YOU THINK I CAN *TRANSFER* MY MEMBERSHIP TO "*THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES*"-- *FAST*?

YOU'RE NOT GETTIN' *ME* TO TACKLE WHAT'S OUT THERE...

15

...'CAUSE IT'S UGLY ENOUGH TO MAKE *KING KONG* LOOK LIKE A MEMBER OF "*THE ZOO CREW*"!

LIGHT! YOU SAID THESE THINGS *ATTACKED* YOU IN THE *MUSEUM*? ARE THEY FROM THE *VISHNU* COLLECTION?

UH, YEAH...

YOU *KNOW* WHAT THOSE THINGS ARE, ROBIN?

I *RECOGNIZED* THEM... THEY'RE FORMS OF *VISHNU*-- *VARAHA*, THE WILD BULL... *NARASIMHA*, THE MAN-LION... *PARASURAMA*, OR RAMA-WITH-THE-AXE...

...AND *MATSYA*, THE FISH, WHOSE STORY BEARS AN AMAZING SIMILARITY TO THE LEGENDS OF NOAH.

WHATEVER THEY ARE, I DON'T *LIKE* 'EM.

COME ON, LIGHT-- WHAT DID YOU *DO* TO THEM?

N-NOTHING. *REALLY* I DIDN'T.

THEY JUST WANT TO *KILL* ME.

THEY'RE REMARKABLY GOOD JUDGES OF *CHARACTER*.

ONLY THEY'RE NOT VERY *PARTICULAR* ABOUT WHO ALSO GETS KILLED ALONG *WITH* YOU.

KRASH!!

I'M NOT *WAITING* HERE ANY LONGER, ROBIN.

THOSE THINGS HAVE GOT TO BE *STOPPED*.

16

PLEASE, DON'T LET THEM GET *NEAR* ME. THEY'LL *KILL* ME.

YOU SHOULD HAVE CONSIDERED THIS *BEFORE* YOU SET THEM FREE, LIGHT.

LISTEN TO ME, TITANS. YOU'RE *HEROES*... YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO *SAVE* PEOPLE LIKE ME.

WILL SOMEONE PUT A *CORK* IN HIM? I'M TRYING TO *CONCEN-TRATE.*

HE WILL BE *CALM*, ROBIN-- THOUGH YOU *MAY REGRET* THIS LATER.

HIS POWERS COULD PROVE *USEFUL* IN STOPPING THOSE GODS.

HE'D BE MORE OF A *HINDRANCE* THAN A HELP, RAVEN.

NOW, EVERYONE *OUTSIDE*. WE'VE GOT TO PROVIDE *COVER* FOR STARFIRE.

IT SEEMS, HOWEVER, THAT THE ALIEN PRINCESS FROM TAMARAN IS QUITE CAPABLE OF HANDLING HERSELF...

IT TAKES ALL MY POWER TO EVEN *BUDGE* THESE THINGS.

AND EVEN THEN, THEY DON'T SEEM TO BE *HURT* ANY.

I THINK I'D BE MORE *WORRIED* IF THESE WEREN'T JUST *ANIMATED STATUES* OF INDIAN GODS...

THEY CAN'T POSSIBLY MOVE AS *QUICKLY* AS--

FLASH-- *MOVE* IT!

OUR LION-FRIEND HERE WAS READY TO PUT THE *BITE* ON YOU.

SMAK!

17

SO MUCH FOR THEIR ABILITY TO *MOVE*... I DIDN'T EVEN SENSE A *RIPPLE* IN THE AIR AS HE CLOSED IN ON ME.

FORTUNATELY, I CAN *SEE* THIS RAMA-WITH-THE-AXE CREEP JUST FINE... *TOO* FINE, ACTUALLY!

OKAY, THEY CAN *MOVE*. BUT THEY'RE NOT *SUPER-FAST*.

I DODGED THAT AXE-BLADE BY THE PROVERBIAL *COUNTRY MILE*.

NOT THAT HE SEEMS *BOTHERED* ANY BY HIS FAR MISS.

TOSSING THE AXE MY WAY... JUST *PERFECT!*

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS *DODGE* THE BLADE, AND MY BIG FRIEND HERE IS *WEAPONLESS*...

MAYBE, KID FLASH...

...BUT MORE LIKELY, MAYBE NOT.

BLAZES! THE AXE IS *FOLLOWING* ME... HOMING IN LIKE A HEAT-SEEKING *MISSILE*.

THIS ADDS AN UNWELCOME *HITCH* TO THE PROCEEDINGS. IF IT KEEPS *FOLLOWING* ME...

...IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE MY *LEGS* FINALLY GIVE OUT.

I'M FAST, BUT EVEN *I* CAN'T RUN *FOREVER*.

AND *THEN* WHAT--?

18

X'HAL! THIS MAN-BOAR WON'T STAY *DOWN.*

MY STARBOLTS MERELY SERVE TO MAKE IT *MADDER* THAN BEFORE.

HOLD ON, GOLDIE, WHILE I LOOSEN A LITTLE *SCREW...*

...AN' GIVE YOU A HELPIN' *HAND!*

HA! ROY ROGERS DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING ON '*HOPALONG*' CYBORG HERE.

GOT 'IM ON MY FIRST TOSS.

ONLY QUESTION *NOW* IS-- WHAT DO I *DO* WITH 'IM?

UH-OH, DONNA NEEDS MY *HELP.*

HEY, GOLDIE-- WHAT DO *I* NEED? CHOPPED LIVER?

GOT ME TOO *TIGHT* TO SQUEEZE FREE, BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

JUST HAVING SOME TROUBLE SHIFTING MY *WEIGHT...*

BUT, BEFORE THE AMAZON WARRIOR CAN ACT...

SKREEEEEEE

DID IT, STARFIRE ...AND *BEAUTI-FULLY,* TOO.

YOU STUNG HIM JUST ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM LOOSEN HIS *GRIP.*

...TO ACHIEVE ENOUGH LEVERAGE FOR MY *LEGS* TO KICK MY WAY FREE.

NOW, *TOGETHER,* PERHAPS WE CAN LAY HIM OUT COLD!

SPLAM

19

THIS IS GETTING *RIDICULOUS.*

I'M GETTING EXHAUSTED, BUT THAT AXE IS *GAINING* SPEED WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND.

WALLACE, LEAD HIM *THIS* WAY.

I CAN *ENVELOP* THAT WEAPON WITHIN THE FOLDS OF MY *SOUL-SELF.*

THEN SHE'S *YOUR* BABY, RAVEN...

...AND *THANKS.*

BUT...

NO! I CANNOT *DO* IT!

PAIN...TERRIBLE *PAIN* SHOOTING THROUGH ME...

...HAVE TO *LET GO*...LET THE AXE *LEAVE* ME BEFORE IT TEARS ME APART.

THE AXE RETURNED TO HIS *HAND.*

HOW DO I STOP HIM BEFORE HE THROWS IT *AGAIN?*

HMMM. THESE TITANS AREN'T HAVING ANY *BETTER* LUCK DESTROYING THOSE THINGS THAN *I* DID.

THEY CAN'T LAST MUCH *LONGER...*

...THEN THOSE BEASTS WILL BE COMING AFTER *ME* AGAIN.

UNLESS I *LEAVE* RIGHT NOW WHILE THEY'RE *BUSY.*

AND MAYBE MAKE ONE BRIEF STOP BACK AT THE MUSEUM, JUST TO ROUND UP ALL THOSE *TREASURES* I LEFT BEHIND.

PARASURAMA'S *DISTRACTED.*

WAIT!

THIS IS THE *ONLY* CHANCE I'VE GOT.

20

IF I CAN JUST *SLOW HIM DOWN* UNTIL THE OTHERS COME...

UNHH. GRABBING HIM IS LIKE GRABBING SLICK *STONE*. TOO HARD TO GET A GOOD *HAND-HOLD*.

ROBIN, *WATCH OUT!* HE'S GONNA...

HE'S ALREADY *DONE* IT, KID FLASH. BUT DON'T *WORRY*...

I'M AN *ACROBAT*. I'VE TAKEN *WORSE* FALLS THAN THIS.

OH, NO... *NO!* I FORGOT ALL ABOUT MATSYA...EH?

HAWKMAN?

I SEE WHAT YOU *MEAN*, HAWKMAN.

ROBIN, WHERE'S *DOCTOR LIGHT?* THOSE THINGS WERE *AFTER* HIM.

LIGHT? HE TOOK OFF, BUT I DON'T KNOW *WHERE TO*.

SOMETHING TELLS ME *I* DO.

SORRY FOR THE *DELAY*. IT TOOK *LONGER* TO PUT OUT MY WING-FIRE THAN I HAD EXPECTED.

KID FLASH, I NEED YOU OVER *HERE*...

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN *HELP* US NOW.

A SUPER-SPEED COLUMN OF *WIND* COMING RIGHT UP!

I WONDER IF THIS IS HOW *MOSES* HELD BACK THE *RED SEA*?

TITANS! CEASE WHAT YOU'RE *DOING*...

WE'RE *MOVING OUT!*

AS FOR WHERE LIGHT HAS ABSCONDED TO...

AH, THIS IS THE LIFE. THE *TITANS* ARE OUT THERE, FIGHTING AND DYING FOR *YOURS TRULY*...

21

...WHILE I'M TAKING MY SWEET TIME IN ADDING MILLIONS TO MY BANKROLL.

SORRY, LIGHT--BUT YOU'RE DEPOSITING YOUR MONEY RIGHT BACK IN AGAIN.

ROBIN?

THUNK!

HMM. THAT MEANS MY GIANT-SIZED SPARRING PARTNERS ARE EITHER DEFEATED OR WILL BE COMING AFTER ME AGAIN.

AND THAT MEANS I HAVEN'T TIME TO WASTE ON--WHAT? YOU AVOIDED MY LIGHT BLASTS?

C'MON, LIGHT, WHEN ARE YOU EVER GOING TO REALIZE YOU'RE A LOSER?

GIVE UP THE FIGHT AND HELP US STOP THOSE LIVING STATUES.

GIVE UP MY TREASURE TOO? NO WAY, KID.

BESIDES, WITH MY TERRIBLE POWER...

...YOU SHOULD BE A HECKUVA LOT BETTER THAN YOU ARE!

THOOM

IT'S OVER, LIGHT... SERIOUSLY OVER FOR YOU!

NOW HELP US, OR I SWEAR WE'LL LEAVE YOU TO THOSE STATUES.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'LL DO TO YOU.

YOU WOULDN'T DARE.

I WOULDN'T, WOULD I? WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT--

--SO MAKE UP YOUR MIND... REAL FAST.

HAWKMAN?

22

THEY'RE RIGHT *BEHIND* US, ROBIN. AND THESE ARE THE *LENSES* LIGHT USED TO BRING THEM TO LIFE.

HE FOCUSED SOME SORT OF *BEAM* THROUGH THEM...

IF WE CAN PERHAPS SEND *ANOTHER* BEAM...

YOU *HEARD* HIM, LIGHT. ARE YOU *COOPERATING*?

I--I *CAN'T.*

SO *HELP* ME, LIGHT...

I'M TELLING YOU, I *CAN'T.* WHEN YOU *PUNCHED* ME, YOU BROKE THE *POWER CIRCUITRY* IN MY COSTUME.

THEN THERE'S NO OTHER *HOPE.* WE *NEED* HIS POWER.

WE HAVE OUR *OWN* POWER, HAWKMAN.

WE DON'T NEED *CRYSTALS.*

HATE TO BREAK UP THE FUN, GUYS... BUT WE'VE GOT FOUR MEAN-LOOKING *VISITORS* JUST OUTSIDE.

IF YOU DON'T *WANT* 'EM...

... DO SOMETHING, REAL *QUICK.*

TOO LATE.

HURRY UP, LIGHT-- WHAT KIND OF *ENERGY* DID YOU USE?

CAN WE JURY-RIG A *SUBSTITUTE?*

I--I USED *SOLAR POWER,* SIMPLE *SUN-RAYS.*

BINGO!

STARFIRE--?

ALL RIGHT, ROBIN. I'VE *GOT* THEM.

AND I KNOW WHAT TO *DO*... BUT I STILL THINK WE DON'T *NEED* THESE CRYSTALS.

23

MY STARBOLTS *FEED* ON SOLAR ENERGY. I'M FOCUSING *ALL* MY POWER THROUGH THE *CRYSTALS*...

THIS HAD BETTER *WORK*, ROBIN. I WON'T BE ABLE TO *RECHARGE* MYSELF FOR HOURS.

STARFIRE DOES HER BEST...

...AND KORIAND'R'S BEST IS SIMPLY STAGGERING TO BEHOLD.

YOU *DID* IT.

IT FELT *GOOD* UNLEASHING MY *FULL POWER* LIKE THAT, ROBIN.

IT FELT *VERY* GOOD.

LIGHT, YOU *STARTED* THIS. YOU ALMOST *KILLED* YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS...

...YOU ALMOST KILLED *ALL* OF US.

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO *DO* WITH ME, HAWKMAN? *WHAT?*

THE HAWKMAN SAYS NOTHING, BUT THE SLY SMILE THAT SNAKES ACROSS HIS LEAN FACE CAUSES THE FRIGHTENED DOCTOR LIGHT TO SIMPLY FAINT DEAD AWAY...

24

EPILOGUE ONE

NEW YORK STATE CORRECTIONAL PRISON...

FOLLOWING AN ALREADY TOO FAMILIAR ROUTINE, DOCTOR LIGHT IS QUICKLY BOOKED AND PROCESSED...

WELCOME BACK, LIGHT.

GRUMBLE.

BY THE WAY, LIGHT, DID YOU HEAR THE LATEST ABOUT *THE RIDDLER?*

I DON'T WANT TO *HEAR* ABOUT THAT CRETIN AGAIN. DO YOU *UNDERSTAND* THAT?

I *HATE* HIS NAME! I *HATE* HIM!

THEN YOU'LL JUST *LOVE* THIS, LIGHT.

THE BATMAN *CAPTURED* HIM LAST NIGHT.

HE'S BACK SERVING *TEN-TO-TWENTY* IN GOTHAM STATE PEN.

THE RIDDLER WAS *CAUGHT?*

HE'S *SERVING TIME?*

MAYBE THIS WASN'T SUCH A *BAD* DAY AFTER ALL.

EPILOGUE TWO

THE APARTMENT OF TERRY LONG...

BING BONG

DONNA?

IS THAT *YOU*, HONEY?

MAN, AM I GLAD *YOU* SHOWED UP TONIGHT. I WAS--

OH--?

TERRY LONG? I AM REALLY SORRY TO *BOTHER* YOU, TERRY...

...BUT MY NAME'S *SARAH SIMMS...*

...AND I REALLY NEED YOUR *HELP.*

25

NEXT ISSUE & TWO TITANIC TITANS TALES! *Dear Mom & Dad...* PLUS A SECOND IMPOSSIBLE SAGA!

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

ALL NEW! 60¢

NO. 20 JUNE

March 11, 1982

Dear Mom and Dad,
It's been a pretty typical week here with the New Teen Titans...

It started as Changeling and Cyborg were hunting a new super-villain called THE DISRUPTOR in the sewer...

My stomach sank as I saw Wonder Girl plummet toward the East River...

Yeah, all in all, a pretty typical week. Your loving son, Wally.

P.S. please send Money!

THEY ARE THE *BEST* THERE IS: *THE CHANGELING*, SHAPE-SHIFTER SUPREME; *CYBORG*, HALF MAN / HALF ROBOT; *KID FLASH*, SUPER-SPEEDSTER; *RAVEN*, MISTRESS OF MAGIC; *ROBIN*, THE TEEN WONDER; *STARFIRE*, ALIEN POWERHOUSE; AND *WONDER GIRL*, THE AMAZING AMAZON! TOGETHER THEY ARE...

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

TITANS' TOWER, NEW YORK CITY...

SO MANY THINGS ARE *CHANGING*, AREN'T THEY?

BUT CHANGE ALWAYS SEEMS TO *UPSET* ME JUST A LITTLE.

I GUESS WHEN IT COMES RIGHT *DOWN* TO IT, I'M RATHER *STAID* IN MY WAYS...

NOT NEARLY AS SPONTANEOUS OR WILD AS THE *OTHER* TITANS. WELL, *SOMEONE'S* GOT TO BE NORMAL--

--THOUGH WHY DOES 'NORMAL' SOUND LIKE A *DISEASE* WHEN I SAY IT?

RAIDERS

BLUE VALLEY

BLUE VALLEY

"GOOD HEAVENS, MAN --HE'S GOT TERMINAL *NORMALCY!*" "YOU SEE HIM, MANFRED? H-HE'S *NORMAL!*"

BUT IF NORMAL MEANS GENERALLY *LIKING* THINGS, OR BEING *HAPPY*, OR HAVING *PARENTS* I LOVE AND CAN TURN TO--

WELL, I *LIKE* BEING NORMAL.

MOM AND DAD, YOU RAISED LITTLE WALLY RATHER *WELL*, DIDN'T YOU? HMMM...

BLUE UNIV

MAYBE IT'S TIME I LET YOU KNOW HOW I *FEEL*.

Dear Mom and Dad

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ • ROMEO TANGHAL
WRITER-- CO-CREATORS-- ARTIST *EMBELLISHER*

BEN ODA • ADRIENNE ROY • LEN WEIN
LETTERER *COLORIST* *EDITOR*

I'VE NEVER TOLD YOU TOO MUCH ABOUT MY LIFE AS *KID FLASH*. MAYBE IT WAS MY WAY OF KEEPING YOU FROM *WORRYING*.

BUT THINGS HAVE *HAPPENED* LATELY THAT I WANT YOU TO *KNOW* ABOUT.

IT DIDN'T BEGIN WITH *ME*, HOWEVER. IT STARTED AS TWO *OTHER* TITANS, *CYBORG* AND *CHANGELING*, WERE HUNTING A NEW SUPER-VILLAIN CALLED *THE DISRUPTOR* DEEP IN THE SEWERS BELOW NEW YORK...

HEY, MY SOUND AMPLIFIER'S PICKIN' UP SOME *SLOSHIN'* COMIN' FROM THAT TUNNEL!

YAHOOO! WE FINALLY GOT THAT CREEP *CAUGHT*, RUSTPOT.

"CYBORG'S A STRANGE CHARACTER. HE'S TOUGH, STREET-BORN, AND SOMETIMES HE CAN BE REALLY MEAN. I JUST CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW HE BECAME FRIENDS WITH THE CHANGELING...

*"...WHO'S OUR **YOUNGEST** TITAN, AND IF YOU WANT MY OPINION, MOM AND DAD -- SOMETIMES THE MOST **OVERBEARING**. I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN HIM **SERIOUS**."*

GOTTA TELL YA, GLITTERS, I DON'T *UNDERSTAND* THIS DISRUPTOR JERK...

...HE KEEPS POPPIN' UP, TRYIN' TO *KILL* US...

...AND THEN *TAKES OFF* AGAIN, RIGHT? YEAH, I *KNOW* IT, KID.

YEAH, YEAH, CHROME-DOME, I *GOT* IT, YOU THINK I'M *STUPID*, HUH?

LISSEN, THE TUNNELS *MEET* UP AHEAD, SO I'M SAYIN' WE *SPLIT UP*. GOT IT, SALAD-HEAD?

DON'T WORRY IT, CYBIE -- MY BAT'S RADAR WILL *HOME-IN* ON OUR WOULD-BE *ASSASSIN*.

*"THE CHANGELING'S A **SHAPE-SHIFTER**. SO HE TOOK THE FORM OF A **BAT** AND SWOOPED THROUGH THOSE FOUL-SMELLING TUNNELS..."*

AH HA, *FOUND* HIM RIGHT OFF. FACE IT, YOU'RE *SOLID GOLD*!

NO WONDER THE GIRLS ALL *LOVE* YA!

*"OH, I FORGOT TO TELL YOU... THE CHANGELING'S GOT A NON-STOP **EGO** AND A **MOUTH** TO MATCH."*

"LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE DISRUPTOR. HE WAS YOUNG, BUT, MAN WAS HE DANGEROUS. HE HAD THE POWER TO DISRUPT THE NORMAL FLOW OF THINGS... WE LEARNED HOW HE GOT THOSE POWERS, BUT THAT CAME LATER..."

WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE BIG BAD WOLF HIMSELF.

WHY DON'T WE PLAY 'LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD,' AND I'LL BE THE WOODSMAN, EH?

CHANGELING? I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.

NO, NO, RED'S SUPPOSED TO SAY "WHAT BIG EYES YOU HAVE!"

AW, I KNOW, YOU JUST DON'T LIKE YOUR ROLE. TELL YA WHAT, 'RUPTY, I'LL BE THE BIG BAD WOLF...

AND NOW YOU SAY, 'MY, WHAT BIG TEETH YOU HAVE, GRAN'MA.'

OOPS, I'M NOT A WOLF, AM I? I'M A TYPICAL NEW YORK CITY SEWER ALLIGATOR...

...OR AM I A CROCODILE? I NEVER GET THEM RIGHT-- ARRGHH!

RROWW!

I HAVEN'T THE TIME FOR GAMES, CHANGELING.

I DON'T LIKE THIS AS IT IS, AND I CERTAINLY DON'T WANT TO PROLONG THINGS!

I'VE BEEN CHANGED BACK? HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

I'M NOT PLAYING GAMES WITH YOU, CHANGELING...

I MERELY DISRUPTED YOUR POWER, CHANGELING--

--AS EASILY AS I CAN DISRUPT THE FLOW OF BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS!

"MOM, DAD, YOU KNOW SUPER-HEROING CAN BE DANGEROUS. IT CAN ALSO BE DEADLY...

0%

3

"...AS I'M SURE THE CHANGELING MUST HAVE THOUGHT JUST THEN."

AAAA

"SO, NOT BEING ABLE TO CONTROL HIS MECHANICAL PARTS, CYBORG FELL...

"...STIFF AS THE *TIN MAN* IN THE 'WIZARD OF OZ.'

YOU SEE, CYBORG, IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE *ONE* OF YOU TITANS FELL.

MY FATHER MADE CERTAIN I WOULD BE *STRONGER* THAN YOU.

AND NOW, TO FINISH THINGS OFF WITH A *FLOURISH*...

...I DISRUPT THE FLOW OF *WATER* IN THOSE RUSTY OLD *PIPES*...

...AND IN LESS THAN TEN MINUTES, BOTH OF YOU WILL *DROWN*--

--WHILE I REPORT BACK TO MY *FATHER*.

HE'LL BE PLEASED WITH MY *SUCCESS*. I'M SURE HE'LL BE *VERY* PLEASED.

I CAN'T *MOVE*...

THE PLAY'S UP TO *YOU*, MAN...DON'T LET ME *DOWN*.

CHANGELING! CHANGELING! YOU *HEAR* ME?

C'MON, BUDDY, OPEN YER EYES... *GET UP... GET UP!!*

UNHHH...

I--IT HURTS TO *MOVE*, CYBORG! IT REALLY *HURTS!*

YOU *GOTTA*, PAL...OR ELSE WE'RE BOTH *DEAD MEAT*.

LORD, THE WATER'S COVERING HIS *FACE* NOW...

NO MATTER *HOW MUCH* IT HURTS...

I GOTTA *DO* SOMETHING! I GOTTA SAVE *CYBORG!*

5

BARELY STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP HIMSELF FROM SINKING UNDER, THE CHANGELING VANISHED INTO THE MUCK-- BUT, JUST A MOMENT LATER...

THANK HEAVEN... YOU *DID* IT, BUDDY.

FORGET IT, PAL. AFTER ALL, I *KNEW* WE'D GET OUTTA THIS *DEATH-TRAP!*

YOU *DID*? BUT *HOW*--?

HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT MY ALL-PURPOSE "*ESCAPE CLAWS*"?

WHAT CAN I *TELL* YOU, MOM AND DAD? THE CHANGELING JUST HAS NO *SHAME*.

BUT I'M NOT REALLY GETTING TO THE *POINT* OF THIS LETTER, AM I?

IT'S SOMETIMES *HARD* WRITING DOWN YOUR INNER-MOST THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS. BUT IF I CAN'T TELL *YOU* ABOUT 'EM, WHO *CAN* I TELL?

CHANGELING AND CYBORG HAD LOST THE DISRUPTOR'S *TRAIL* AND SO THEY RETURNED TO TITANS' TOWER...

...."ESCAPE CLAWS." *GET* IT?

HE CHANGED CHANGELING BACK TO *HUMAN*, FROZE MY *MECHANICAL PARTS*, AND SOMEHOW OPENED THOSE *SEWER PIPES*.

ROBBIE, HE WON'T BE EASY TO *STOP*.

BLAST. I DON'T *LIKE* THIS, CYBORG.

HE'S *OUTGUESSED* ME AT EVERY TURN.

INSTEAD OF SOME *HERO*, I FEEL LIKE A STUPID *KID*.

BUT WE *ALMOST* HAD HIM, ROBIN.

PEOPLE HAVE LOST *FORTUNES* BETTING ON "ALMOSTS," STARFIRE.

I SHOULD HAVE HAD THIS ALL *FIGURED OUT* BY NOW. WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH ME THESE DAYS?

WHAT'S WITH THIS *SELF-DEPRECATION* BIT? YOU KNOW YOU'RE *GOOD*.

DO I? I WISH I *DID*, WONDER GIRL. WITH *YOU* GUYS IT SEEMS LIKE I'M HOT STUFF... A *KNOW-IT-ALL*...

...BUT I'VE BEEN BACK WITH *THE BATMAN* AGAIN, AND NEXT TO *HIM* I FEEL LIKE I'M A STUPID KID REPEATING *FIFTH GRADE*...

...FOR THE *THIRD TIME*.

AND NOW *THIS*. THE DISRUPTOR'S AS YOUNG AS *WE* ARE. WHY HAVEN'T I FIGURED HIM OUT BY NOW. *WHY?*

YOU KNOW, I ALWAYS THOUGHT OF ROBIN AS SOMEONE *INFALLIBLE*...

...SO MUCH *BETTER* THAN ME, ALWAYS WITH EVERY *ANSWER* RIGHT AT HIS FINGERTIPS.

IT CAME AS QUITE A *SHOCK* TO DISCOVER THAT, JUST LIKE ME, HE SOMETIMES HAS *FEET OF CLAY*...

I GUESS SOMETIMES WE'RE ALL *INSECURE* ABOUT OURSELVES. BUT IF *ROBIN'S* WORRYING SURPRISED ME, *WONDER GIRL'S* SENT ME FOR A LOOP...

SHHHHH. HE'S COMING.

HEY! WHERE *IS* EVERYONE? WHY'RE THE *LIGHTS* OUT, MAN?

SURPRISE!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TINHEAD!

WHAT IN THE WORLD? HOW'D YOU PEOPLE *KNOW--?*

Happy Birthday Victor
with Love
The Titans

AW, LOOKIT 'IM. 'BORGY'S *SHY*, ISN'T HE?

C'MON, RUSTY, JOIN THE *FUN*. IT'S ALL FOR *YOU!*

THIS IS A *WONDERFUL* IDEA. WE DON'T HAVE *BIRTHDAY PARTIES* ON TAMARAN.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CYBORG.

YEAH, *THANKS*, STARFIRE.

SO, YOU'RE *NINETEEN* TODAY. JOIN THE *CROWD*.

NINETEEN? YOUNGSTERS! *CHILDREN!*

TERRY, YOU'RE JUST *JEALOUS* BECAUSE YOU'RE ALMOST *MIDDLE AGED*.

HEY! 29'S NOT MIDDLE AGED. *IS* IT?

OH, *HI*, RAVEN. HOW *ARE* YOU?

I AM *WELL*, WALLACE. AND *YOU*?

UH, OHH... GOOD.

"MAN, YOU COULD CUT THE TENSION BETWEEN US WITH A DULLED-DOWN BUTTER KNIFE."

YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE *ENJOYING* YOURSELF. SOMETHING *WRONG*?

NO. *EXCUSE* ME, WALLACE...

YEAH, SURE...

"TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT RAVEN WOULD FILL UP A HUNDRED LETTERS...

"SO LET ME GET BACK TO THE PARTY, WHICH WAS FUN.

"AS USUAL, CHANGELING WAS MAKING A JACKASS OF HIMSELF...

"...BUT HE WAS THE LIFE OF THE PARTY. HE REALLY KEPT THE PLACE HOPPING.

"AND THE ONLY ONE WHO WASN'T ENJOYING HERSELF THEN WAS WONDER GIRL. SHE WALKED OFF WITH TERRY LONG...

"THAT'S THE GUY I TOLD YOU ABOUT. HE'S DIVORCED. A COLLEGE TEACHER. AND THEY SEEM TO LOVE EACH OTHER VERY MUCH.

8

...NO, TERRY, NOTHING'S WRONG. WHY DO YOU *ASK?*

BECAUSE, LOVE, I'M NOT *BLIND* TO *YOUR* LITTLE QUIRKS.

WANT TO *TALK?*

IT'S REALLY *INSIGNIFICANT,* TERRY.

GREAT! THEN WE'LL BE BACK TO THE PARTY IN *NO TIME.* SO--?

IT'S *BIRTHDAYS,* TERRY.

YOU DON'T *LIKE* BIRTHDAY PARTIES?

NO, JUST *BIRTHDAYS.*

I DON'T *THINK* ABOUT IT OFTEN, HONEY, BUT AT TIMES LIKE THIS... WELL, I CAN'T *AVOID* THINKING.

I DON'T KNOW WHEN *MINE* IS. HOW *COULD* I WHEN I DON'T KNOW WHO I *AM?*

I DON'T KNOW MY *AGE,* OR EVEN MY *REAL NAME.*

I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING TO GET TO THE TRUTH, AND I'VE *FAILED.*

AND SOMETIMES IT REALLY *HURTS* NOT KNOWING. SOMETIMES I WAKE UP *CRYING...*

CAN WE *GO,* TERRY? I'M NOT IN THE *MOOD* RIGHT NOW.

SURE, HONEY. BESIDES, I'VE GOT THAT LATE *SEMINAR* TO GO TO.

BY THE WAY, YOU TELL CYBORG THAT *SARAH SIMMS* CAME TO SEE ME?

YEAH. HE JUST NODDED AND *WALKED AWAY.*

HE DIDN'T SAY A *WORD.* JUST WALKED AWAY.

Happy Birthday, Victor. Love, Sarah and the Kids

BEFORE I TELL YOU ABOUT *SARAH SIMMS,* YOU HAVE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT *CYBORG.* HIS MOTHER *DIED* IN THE ACCIDENT THAT DESTROYED HIS BODY. HIS FATHER, WHO OUTFITTED HIM WITH HIS STEEL FORM, JUST *RECENTLY* DIED.

SARAH SIMMS IS A *GIRL* HE MET. SHE TEACHES *PARAPLEGIC KIDS.* WELL, ONE OF OUR ENEMIES *KIDNAPPED* SARAH A FEW MONTHS BACK.

...AND CYBORG BLAMES *HIMSELF* FOR WHAT HAPPENED. HE'S REFUSED TO *SEE* HER EVER SINCE.

9

IT'S STRANGE, BUT HEARING ALL THOSE *OTHER* PROBLEMS SORT OF BROUGHT OUT ALL OF MY *OWN*...

"FOR SO LONG I COULDN'T DECIDE WHETHER TO GO TO COLLEGE OR BE KID FLASH THAT I NEVER REALIZED I COULD TRY TO DO BOTH...

"AND THEN THERE WAS RAVEN.

"I TOLD YOU A LITTLE ABOUT HER. MAYBE YOU COULD TELL THAT I REALLY LOVE HER...

"...EVEN THOUGH THAT LOVE IS NEVER RECIPROCATED. NOT EVER IN ANY WAY..."

RAVEN, WHY DOES CYBORG'S BIRTHDAY MAKE ME THINK ABOUT *TAMARAN?*

IT'S BEEN ALMOST *SEVEN YEARS* SINCE I'VE BEEN BACK HOME.

I ACHE TO SEE MY *PARENTS* AGAIN. AND I LONG TO SEE MY LITTLE BROTHER, *RYAND'R*...

LITTLE BROTHER? HE MUST BE NEARLY AS OLD AS THE *CHANGELING*--IF HE'S EVEN *ALIVE*.

OH, RAVEN. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW IT *FEELS*. I--I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF TAMARAN STILL *EXISTS*.

"STARFIRE--HER REAL NAME IS PRINCESS KORIAND'R--IS FROM ANOTHER WORLD.

*"BOY, TALK ABOUT **HARD LIVES**. SHE WAS KIDNAPPED AT TWELVE, BEATEN, TORTURED, HURT IN SO MANY WAYS IT HURTS TO EVEN **THINK** OF THEM...*

"I NEEDED SOME FRESH AIR TO THINK THINGS OUT.

*"I TOOK MY BINOCULARS TO LOOK AT NEW YORK'S SKYLINE AT NIGHT... IT'S SO **BEAUTIFUL**, MOM AND DAD...*

"...SO UNLIKE THE FLAT PLAINS OF BLUE VALLEY. THAT'S WHEN I SAW WONDER GIRL GLIDING ACROSS THE CITY...

10

"I WATCHED HER FOR A WHILE, THEN SUDDENLY SHE CLUTCHED HER SIDE...

"I COULD TELL SHE HAD BEEN BADLY HURT.

"BUT WHAT COULD HURT AN AMAZON?

"I STARED IN HORROR --FOR TOO LONG, I THINK. THEN MY STOMACH SANK...

"...AS I SAW WONDER GIRL PLUMMET TOWARD THE EAST RIVER.

"SHE FELL, AND THEN I SAW HIM. THE DISRUPTOR HAD RETURNED...

"WELL, I'M SURE I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU HOW I FELT AS I WATCHED THE LEERING, GRINNING GHOUL...

"...AND MAYBE I WAS STUPID IN NOT ALERTING THE OTHERS, BUT I TOOK OFF WITH ALL MY SUPER-SPEED...

"...I RAN SO FAST THAT I DIDN'T SINK INTO THE WATER, BUT INSTEAD SKIMMED OVER ITS SURFACE.

"LESS THAN THREE SECONDS LATER, I WAS SETTING UP A WHIRLWIND TO KNOCK THE DISRUPTOR ALL THE WAY FROM NEW YORK TO CINCINNATI!

11

"ONLY I HAD FORGOTTEN HOW DANGEROUS THE DISRUPTOR'S POWERS COULD BE.

WHOOM

"SOMEHOW HE HAD CHANGED THE DIRECTION OF MY WHIRLWIND. INSTEAD OF HITTING HIM...

"IT BLASTED RIGHT BACK INTO ME!"

I DID IT. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, BUT I GOT TWO MORE TITANS.

CHANGELING AND CYBORG, WONDER GIRL AND NOW KID FLASH.

THERE'S ONLY THREE LEFT.

THIS WAY, SIR. HE IS WAITING!

DID YOU SEE THAT, HENRY? I KILLED KID FLASH.

DAD'S GOING TO BE SO PROUD.

DAD, HE'S DEAD. I SENT HIS WIND-FUNNEL RIGHT BACK AT HIM.

THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD HAVE SURVIVED ITS IMPACT.

VOTE

YOU JERK, I COULD NAME A DOZEN DIFFERENT WAYS.

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE HIS KIND.

COME ON, DAD. I SAW HIM FALL.

DO YOU FORGET WHO I AM, MICHAEL? I AM "BRAINS" BELDON.

I HAVE BATTLED THE BATMAN TO A STANDSTILL.

I KNOW HOW THESE SUPER-POWERED SIMPLETONS PLY THEIR TRADE.

IF YOU DID NOT PERSONALLY SEE A DEAD BODY, HE IS NOT DEAD.

WHICH MAKES YOU AS MUCH AN IDIOT AS THEY ARE. HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY BE MY SON?

BUT, DAD, I DID WHAT YOU WANTED, DIDN'T I? I WENT OUT TO KILL YOUR ENEMIES.

AND YOU FAILED, MICHAEL.

12

"OF COURSE I WASN'T DEAD, WHEN I SAW THE WIND TURN, I VIBRATED AT SUPER-SPEED... LET MOST OF IT PASS HARMLESSLY THROUGH ME.

"THEN AFTER I PULLED WONDER GIRL OUT OF THE WATER AND MADE SURE SHE WOULD BE ALL RIGHT...

"...I TOOK AFTER THE LIMOUSINE. NOW, I DIDN'T WANT TO ATTACK THIS 'BRAINS' BELDON CREEP OR HIS SON UNTIL I FOUND OUT WHAT THEY WERE AFTER...

"...SO I REMAINED PRACTICALLY INVISIBLE WHILE THE LIMO DROVE TO EAST HAMPTON, LONG ISLAND...

"A PLACE SO POSH THEY DON'T WASH DIRTY CARS -- THEY BUY NEW ONES."

I'M *NOT* A FAILURE, DAD. I DO MY BEST, I *SWEAR* I DO.

I DON'T WANT TO *KILL* THE TITANS, BUT I'M DOING IT FOR *YOU.*

I'D DO *ANYTHING* FOR YOU, DAD. IF ONLY YOU'D SAY SOMETHING *NICE* TO ME... JUST *ONCE.*

MICHAEL, YOU ARE AN INCOMPETENT *NEANDERTHAL.* YOU MUST TAKE AFTER YOUR *MOTHER'S* FAMILY--

SHE WAS A BEAUTIFUL, *MAGNIFICENT* CREATURE, BUT YOU COULD PASS HER *BRAINS* THROUGH THE EYE OF A *NEEDLE*...

...AND STILL HAVE ROOM LEFT OVER FOR *WOOLEN YARN.*

I WAS FOOLISHLY *COUNTING* ON YOU, MICHAEL. IF YOU COULD *DESTROY* THE TITANS IN THE SUIT I DESIGNED...

...*THE H.I.V.E.* WOULD HAVE GIVEN ME THEIR PRIZED *SEVENTH SEAT.*

LIKE ME, THEY ARE ALL *SCIENTISTS* WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY LOST BATTLES TO VARIOUS *SUPER-HEROES*...

...BUT THEY HAVE ALL LEARNED TO *CO-OPERATE* AND USE THEIR MUTUAL SKILLS TO MAKE THEM *UNDEFEATABLE.*

"WE HAD BATTLED THE H.I.V.E. FOR MONTHS, AND THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I KNEW WHAT THAT GROUP WAS ALL ABOUT."

"SOMETIMES DAD HAS TOLD ME I DON'T THINK BEFORE I ACT. WELL, DAD, YOU'RE RIGHT. MAYBE I WAS GETTING COCKY...

"...BUT I DECIDED RIGHT THEN TO GRAB BELDON AND HIS SON BY MYSELF."

WHAT?

"HIS BODYGUARD GRABBED FOR HIS GUN...

WHAM!

OKAY, BELDON, YOU'RE *NEXT.*

"...BUT BEFORE IT COULD CLEAR HIS HOLSTER, HE WAS OUT FOR THE NIGHT."

SO YOU *KILLED* HIM, DID YOU? THEN HIS BLASTED *GHOST* HAS RETURNED.

DO SOMETHING, YOU NITWIT. USE THAT SUIT'S *POWER.*

I... UHHHH...

MOM, I KNOW HOW YOU *GET* SOMETIMES, SO IF YOU'D PREFER NOT READING WHAT COMES *NEXT*, JUST SKIP TO THE NEXT PARAGRAPH. DAD, IF YOU'RE STILL *THERE*... WELL, I NEVER *FELT* THAT WAY BEFORE.

HE'S NOT GETTING THE *CHANCE*, BELDON.

BEFORE HE KNOWS WHAT *HIT* HIM, HE'LL BE--

AGGHHHH!

"OH, DAD, -- MY HEART SUDDENLY WENT CRAZY. I THINK MY BLOOD PRESSURE SHOT UP TO OVER 200.

"I COULDN'T MOVE, COULDN'T BREATHE... COULDN'T FIGHT BACK AS THE DISRUPTOR POUNDED ON ME, SMASHED AT ME... IT WAS HORRIBLE.

I WOULD HAVE BEEN SO GLAD TO *DIE* JUST THEN IF ONLY TO STOP THE POUNDING *PAIN*. MY GOD, WAS IT *AWFUL*.

FORTUNATELY, PERHAPS, I WAS *UNCONSCIOUS* BEFORE MUCH LONGER. OKAY, TELL MOM SHE CAN START *READING* AGAIN.

ANYWAY, I WOKE UP SOON ENOUGH. MAYBE *TOO* SOON.

I DON'T *BELIEVE* THIS. THE *H.I.V.E.* -- *AGAIN*?

DON'T YOU JERKS *EVER* GIVE UP?

BELDON, YOU *FAILED* IN YOUR FIRST ATTEMPT AT SLAYING A TITAN.

YES, I KNOW MY *SON* FAILED, BUT WE'VE CAPTURED *KID FLASH*...

...AND THIS TIME I'LL MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T *SURVIVE*.

I WANT THAT SEVENTH *SEAT*.

AND HE'LL *GET* IT. THE DISRUPTOR'S PREVENTING ME FROM *RUNNING* OUT OF HERE...

...THOUGH THAT DOESN'T STOP ME FROM USING MY *SUPER-SPEED* POWERS...

...TO SET UP *VIBRATIONS* THAT WILL CARRY ALL THE WAY TO TITANS' TOWER...

...AND PRAY THEY DO WHAT ROBIN AND I SET UP SO LONG AGO IN CASE OF *EMERGENCIES* LIKE THIS.

TITANS' TOWER...

HE JUST HIT ME WITH THOSE *DISRUPTING* POWERS...

...AND I FELL LIKE YOUR PROVERBIAL *BRICK*.

AND WHAT OF *KID FLASH*?

HE WASN'T *THERE* WHEN I--

BOOM!

RAVEN, WONDER GIRL, STARFIRE -- THAT WAS A *SONIC BOOM*.

KID FLASH'S *SIGNAL*, ISN'T IT?

CYBORG HAS THE MOST EXTENSIVE *SCIENCE* BACKGROUND OF ANY OF US. HE USED HIS IN-BODY *COMPUTER SENSORS* TO TRACE MY SONIC BOOM'S *TRAJECTORY*.

BUT EVEN WITH THE TITANS' ABILITIES, IT STILL SEEMED TO TAKE *FOREVER* BEFORE--

ARE YOU *ALL RIGHT?*

I AM *NOW*, WONDER GIRL... I CERTAINLY AM *NOW*.

C'MON, YA HEROES-- WE *FOUND* 'IM!

THE *TITANS?* BUT, DAD, I *KILLED* MOST OF THEM.

KA-THOOM!

THEY *CAN'T* BE ALIVE.

YOU BRAINLESS DOLT, DON'T STAND THERE *WHIMPERING*. STOP THEM NOW AND *REDEEM* YOURSELF.

BUT I *KNOW* I KILLED THEM. I SAW THEM *DIE*. I DROWNED *TWO*, AND--

YOUR FATHER WAS *RIGHT*, DISRUPTOR-- YOU *ARE* A NITWIT.

YOU RELAXED YOUR *DISRUPTING POWERS* LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO BREAK MY *BONDS*...

...AND PUT YOU ALL *OUT OF COMMISSION*.

HE DID IT *AGAIN*. STOPPED ME *COLD*. ONLY THIS TIME HE SEEMED TO DISRUPT THE *SYNAPSES* IN MY BRAIN. NO, MOM, IT *SOUNDS* WORSE THAN IT FELT.

IF FACT, I FELT *NOTHING*...

YOU HANDLE *HIM*, FLASHER. I GOT *THIS* ONE.

Y'SEE, PAL, I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN THUGS DRAW THEIR *GUNS!*

DON'T CALL ME *NITWIT!* I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN MY *FATHER* DOES--

--AND I *HATE* IT WHEN *YOU* DO!

AGHHH!

16

"NOT EVEN AS I FOUND MYSELF SPINNING SPASTICALLY ACROSS THE ROOM...

ROBIN...

...WATCH...

OOF!

...OU--

KRAK!

I'LL SHOW YOU NOW, DAD.

I'M IN FULL COMMAND OF THESE POWERS.

"IT WAS TERRIBLE, MOM AND DAD. WONDER GIRL'S LASSO WAS UNCONTROLLABLE...

"...IT SNAPPED AROUND HER, PINNING HER...

"...WHILE CYBORG FOUND HALF THE MECHANISMS IN HIS ARM SUDDENLY FLARE UP AND SHORT-CIRCUIT.

"CHANGELING SPUN OUT OF CONTROL, UNABLE TO KEEP HIS ANIMAL SHAPES...

"...WHILE STARFIRE, THE POOR GIRL, FELT HER OWN SOLAR POWER EXPLODE WITHIN HER."

YOU SEE, FATHER? I TOLD YOU I WOULD KILL THE TITANS!

THE H.I.V.E. WILL LET YOU JOIN THEM NOW, DAD.

ALL BECAUSE OF ME.

NO, MICHAEL BELDON, YOU HAVE NOT SHOWN YOUR STRENGTH IN DEFEATING MY FRIENDS...

...YOU HAVE ONLY SHOWN WHY PEOPLE SUCH AS YOU ARE TO BE PITIED.

NOW YOU WILL SEE HOW TERRIBLE THE LIFE YOU HAVE SOUGHT TO LIVE CAN BE.

17

AND PERHAPS, MICHAEL BELDON, YOU WILL *CHANGE* YOUR WAYS BEFORE IT IS FAR *TOO LATE.*

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE DISRUPTOR SAW, BUT I WILL NEVER FORGET THE LOOK OF UTTER HORROR TATTOOED ON HIS FACE.

"IT WAS AWFUL. HE SCREAMED AND SCREAMED...

"... AND THE SCREAMING NEVER SEEMED TO STOP.

"I KNOW NOW WHAT IT MUST BE LIKE TO FACE YOUR OWN HELL -- BECAUSE, GOD FORGIVE HIM, MICHAEL BELDON SURELY MUST HAVE SEEN HIS FATE...

"... A FATE THAT WAS TOO TERRIBLE TO ACCEPT. I STARED FOR A LONG TIME AT RAVEN, WONDERING HOW SHE, WHO PRACTICES AND PREACHES PACIFISM, COULD BE SO TOTALLY CRUEL. SHE MUST HAVE GUESSED WHY I WAS GLARING AT HER..."

HE WOULD HAVE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO *KILL* JUST TO SATISFY HIS FATHER'S TWISTED *MADNESS.* I COULD NOT ALLOW THAT HATRED TO *FESTER* WITHIN HIM...

MY *OWN* FATHER IS ONE SUCH AS BELDON. CRUEL, EVIL, *MERCILESS.*

MICHAEL BELDON HAD TO LEARN HOW *TERRIBLE* THAT PATH COULD BE.!

HE HAD TO SEE OR HE MIGHT HAVE *EMBRACED* THE EVIL THAT I CHOSE TO *SPURN.*

"MICHAEL BELDON HAD REMINDED RAVEN OF HERSELF AND TRIGON. IT'S THE FIRST TIME I EVER THOUGHT OF RAVEN IN THAT LIGHT.

"LORD, WHAT MUST IT HAVE BEEN *LIKE* FOR HER TO HAVE A FATHER WHO WAS A TOTAL FORCE FOR EVIL? EVEN NOW I SHUDDER TO THINK OF IT.

18

IT WAS ALL *OVER*, AT LEAST THE *ACTION* PART OF THE STORY.

BUT WHAT REALLY *HURT* WAS WHAT HAPPENED *NEXT*.

*"MICHAEL BELDON REFUSED TO IMPLICATE HIS FATHER. HE INSISTED THAT THE ENTIRE SCHEME WAS **HIS**. WE HAD NO **PROOF** WE COULD SHOW THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, SO 'BRAINS' WENT **FREE**...*

"...WHILE HIS SON TOOK A TEN-YEAR RAP. BELDON DID VISIT HIS SON THE DAY AFTER HE BEGAN HIS SENTENCE."

BECAUSE OF *YOU*, THE *H.I.V.E.* TURNED ME *DOWN*.

YOU'RE AN *EMBARRASSMENT*, MICHAEL. ONE I CAN NO LONGER *TOLERATE*.

BUT, DAD, I DID MY *BEST*. I TRIED FOR YOU. CAN'T YOU *SEE* THAT?

ALL I SEE IS A USELESS *FOOL* WHO HAS ROBBED ME OF MY GREATEST *DREAM*.

I NO LONGER WANT TO *KNOW* YOU. I NO LONGER WANT TO *ASSOCIATE* WITH YOU.

AND I NO LONGER WANT TO *SEE* YOU AGAIN.

NO, DON'T *SAY* THAT, DAD. PLEASE DON'T *SAY* THAT.

ALL I EVER WANTED WAS YOUR *LOVE*.

YOU CAN'T TURN YOUR *BACK* ON ME, DAD. PLEASE...DON'T *DO* THAT TO ME...

PLEASE, DAD...

I *LOVE* YOU, DAD... DAD, I LOVE YOU...

D...DON'T GO AWAY... DON'T LEAVE ME... PLEASE...

THEIRS WAS A FAMILY WITHOUT *LOVE*, AND THAT GOT ME TO *THINKING*.

I HAD JUST SEEN ROBIN DESPERATELY TRYING TO LIVE UP TO AN *IMAGE* RATHER THAN BEING *HIMSELF*...

WONDER GIRL DESPERATELY WANTING SUCH A SIMPLE THING-- HER OWN *IDENTITY*.

WHILE STARFIRE ONLY WANTED THE *JOY* OF KNOWING HER FAMILY MIGHT STILL BE *ALIVE*.

I'D NEVER REALLY *UNDERSTOOD* RAVEN'S TRAUMAS CAUSED BY *TRIGON*, OR CYBORG'S PROBLEMS WITH *SARAH SIMMS*...

19

I WAS ALWAYS SO WRAPPED UP WITH MY *OWN* PROBLEMS AND THINKING NO ONE *ELSE* HAD ANY. BUT THEY *DO*.

YOU TWO HAVE SHOWN ME THE *LOVE* MICHAEL BELDON NEVER HAD...

YOU ENCOURAGED ME TO BE *MYSELF*. YOU WERE THERE WHEN I *NEEDED* YOU, AND I ALWAYS FELT I COULD *TALK* TO YOU...

...and not be threatened by you. Because of you being there I grew up into a full person who wanted to say something I really haven't said enough. Mom and Dad, I love you so very much

"LOVE, WALLY."

AH, *THERE* YOU ARE, WALLY.

LISTEN, I'M HEADING INTO MANHATTAN. *NEED* ANYTHING?

WANT ME TO MAIL THAT *LETTER* FOR YOU?

MAIL IT?

NAH.

I THINK I'LL DELIVER IT *IN PERSON*.

A TITANS MINI-SAGA FOLLOWS!

WHILE *NEXT ISSUE*: THE TITANS' *GREATEST* FOE YET:

BROTHER BLOOD!

A TITANIC TALE OF TITANS' TOMFOOLERY!

A DARK, SECLUDED PLACE CALLED HERNANDO'S HIDEAWAY...

EUREKA! LOOK, FAITHFUL BORIS! I, IGOR IGORIGORIGORIVICH, HAVE PROVED MY THEORY AT LAST!

ANOTHER EARTH-- IDENTICAL TO OURS IN ALMOST EVERY WAY.

OBOY, OH, JOY. THIS IS GREAT, AIN'T IT?

ANOTHER EARTH

DELUXE EARTH-FINDER PAT PEND.

ACME

HELLO MY NAME IS BORIS

ANUDDER OITH? UH, MASTER--?

WHERE'S DUH FOIST OITH?

EGGS MILK BUTTER RAYGUN KETCHUP

BORIS?

YES, MASTER?

STICK YOUR HEAD IN A CUISINART AND PUSH FOR PUREE!

CREDIT BOX: NOBODY'S TAKING THE BLAME FOR THIS ONE!

THERE ARE NO SUPER-HEROES ON THAT OTHER EARTH I SHALL CONVENIENTLY CALL EARTH-PRIME.

NEWSSTAND

DAH TITANS? BUT, MASTER, YOU NEVER FORT DAH TITANS.

SHTUPID! SCHVEIN! AND ALL THOSE OTHER TERMS OF ENDEAR-MENT!

WAP!

SO, I PICKED THE TITANS. Y'KNOW, THEY'RE YOUNG. MAYBE THEM I COULD DEFEAT.

YOU WANT I SHOULD GO AFTER SUPERMAN?

DC COMIC

TITANS

YAHAHA! EVIL, AREN'T I?

NO HEROES, BUT THERE ARE COMIC BOOKS--INCLUDING ONE THAT STARS MY HATED FOES-- THE TEEN TITANS!

I'M A MAD SCIENTIST, AREN'T I? I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE ARCH-FOES.

NOW, FAITHFUL, STUPID BORIS, DO AS I SAY AND MY NEFARIOUS PLAN CAN COMMENCE!

MEANWHILE, ON THE MYTHICAL WORLD CALLED EARTH-PRIME...

OH, LEN. I'M DOOMED! I'VE RUN OUT OF TITANS' IDEAS.

I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD DREAM ABOUT THEM IN WEEKS!

MORE PEREZ PAGES FOR ROMEO

I HAVE TO INK THIS? OY, THOSE BACKGROUNDS!

ARTIST TO EDITOR! LEN, YOU THINK YOU CAN HELP WHAT'S-HIS-NAME?

SURE, GEORGE. GIMME A MINUTE.

FLUFFY, I'M SO SORRY ABOUT LAST NIGHT...

OH, NO! IT'S TOO LATE! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!

LEN! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE--HELP!

SURE, GEORGE, GIMME A MINUTE.

CAN'T WE STILL BE FRIENDS, FLUFFY?

TH-THEY'RE GONE!

DON'T WORRY, ROMEO. THEY'LL BE BACK WHEN THE PAYCHECKS SHOW UP.

WH-WHERE ARE WE, GEORGE?

WELL, THIS SURE ISN'T THE DC COMMISSARY!

SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE FOOD STINKS HERE!

SO, YOU'VE BEEN TO EARTH-ONE BEFORE, EH?

THEN YOU KNOW WE MAD SCIENTISTS HERE HAVE ALL SORTS OF SCIENTIFIC-GOBBLY-GOOK WEAPONS.

SAVE A WATT

YOU WRITE AND DRAW THE TEEN TITANS. YOU WILL TELL ME ALL THEIR SECRETS!

NO WAY, JOSÉ. NEVER!

EEEP! ON THE OTHER HAND...

FREELANCERS ENTRANCE

TOO LATE, FOUR-EYES!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY GOOD BUDDY, MY PAL, MY TALENTED PARTNER--

DAISY, DAISY, GIVE ME YOUR ANSWER DO...

--AND THE CLOWN WHO WROTE ALL THESE LIES?

THE SAME AS I'LL DO TO YOU, CHUBS.

BOY, THIS'LL MAKE A GREAT SPECIAL EFFECT WHEN I WAKE UP.

I WILL WAKE UP, WON'T I?

2

GEORGE'S QUESTION IS ANSWERED SOON ENOUGH, AS...

I DON'T KNOW WHERE WE *ARE*, BUT I'M SURE GLAD *I* DON'T HAVE TO DRAW THIS.

THIS, MY OVERWEIGHT GUESTS, IS MY TYPICAL MAD SCIENTIST'S *LABORATORY.*

I GOT IT AT A *DISCOUNT* FROM "KIRBY, INC."!

DUH, MASTER, I DONE *STOLE* WHAT YOU SENT ME TO STOLE.

THE WHOPPER

THIS END UP

HEAVY

EXCELLENT, MY FAITHFUL CRO-MAGNON!

NOW, BEFORE I TURN YOUR BRAINS INTO *SPAGHETTI-O'S* -- WILL YOU *TALK?*

TALK? I'LL *SING!* I'LL *DANCE!* I'LL EVEN RECITE THE *KORAN!*

TRAITOR! YOU'D RAT ON THE *TITANS* JUST TO SAVE YOUR *LIFE?*

YEP! SURE! IN A SEC! OF COURSE! BETTER BELIEVE IT!

DON'T *WORRY.* YOU WON'T HAVE TO *TALK!*

EEEP!

SPACE FOR RENT

OH, NO. IT--IT CAN'T BE--*THEM!*

WELL, YOU'RE *RIGHT.* IT'S NOT '*THEM*', IT'S *US!*

WE FOLLOWED YOUR *GOON*, IGORIGORIGOR-IVICH--

--RIGHT AFTER HE STOLE THAT *WHATEVER-IT-IS.*

I WANT YOUR CAPTIVES *FREED.*

ROBBIE, HIS NAME'S NOT '*FREED.*' IT'S--

HI, GUYS. I WAS JUST *KIDDING* BACK THERE.

HONEST INJUN, I WASN'T *REALLY* GOING TO TALK.

YOU'LL STILL *SAVE* ME, WON'T YOU? *PLEASE?*

SIGH! SOMETIMES I WONDER WHY I GOT *INTO* THIS BUSINESS.

PEREZ DEBRIS

NON-WELCOME

WOLFMAN, YOU'RE *DESPICABLE!*

3

WRONG! I'M THE ONE WHO'S DESPICABLE! AND NOW I'LL PROVE IT!

MY ROBOTS WILL TOTALLY DESTROY YOU.

WAKE UP!

OR MAYBE JUST PARTIALLY DESTROY YOU. WHO KNOWS?

SIC 'EM, MO, LAR-E, AND KUR-LE!

ROBOTS? CRIPES! EVERYONE USES ROBOTS THESE DAYS!

ONLY PROBLEM IS, THEY ALL GOT GLASS JAWS!

YEAH, I HEAR THEY SELL 'EM REAL CHEAP DOWN AT "JUNKHEAPS 'R' US"!

TINKLE!

THEN, SUDDENLY, MELODRAMATICALLY...

?

MY LAB? MY BACKGROUNDS? WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BACKGROUNDS?

TO ROMEO-- I FIGURE YOU NEEDED A PANEL TO REST... TAKE TEN -G.P.

THE OTHER ROBOTS ARE ATTACKING!

FORTUNATELY, I GOT ME A GLASS CUTTER IN MY WEAPONS POUCH!

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T HAVE IN THAT BELT OF YOURS, CHROME-DOME?

YEAH, SALAD-HEAD. A MUZZLE FOR YOU!

TINKLE!

YOU MAY HAVE DEFEATED MY ROBOTS, BUT I STILL LIVE.

AND I LIVE TO--

DON'T STAND HERE

YOU'VE BEEN WARNED

SIZZLE

YOU TWO?

WE HADDA BE THE HEROES, RIGHT?

PRESS HERE TO ROAST MAD SCIENTI-

4

I'M GONNA MAKE A FORTUNE *RECYCLING* THESE INTO *LAMPS!*

IT'S REALLY A PLEASURE *MEETING* YOU. I JUST CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT.

I'M NOT SURE *WE* CAN, EITHER. JUST ONE QUESTION, THO'--

--*WHO* ARE YOU?

POST NO BILLS

HI!

I'M MARV!

I'M A WRITER!

HI!

I'M STARFIRE!

I'M A SUPER-HERO!

YOU'RE GORGEOUS!

HI, GEORGE.

BUT, JUST AS MARV'S SMILE FADES INTO A QUIVERING MASS OF RED JELLO...

ZAP!

ROBIN! THEY'RE GONE!

SOMEHOW, STARFIRE, I DON'T FEEL ALL *TOO BAD* ABOUT THAT!

WHAT'S *HAPPENING* TO US, GEORGE?

CAN'T YOU *GUESS?* WITH ONLY *FOUR PANELS* LEFT TO THIS STORY...

...WE'RE RETURNING *HOME.*

AND JUST IN TIME TO WATCH "*THAT'S RIDICULOUS*" ON *TV.*

I'M GLAD YOU'RE SO *UNDERSTAND-ING,* FLUFFY.

IT WON'T *EVER* HAPPEN AGAIN.

MARV. GEORGE. YOU'RE *LATE* ON YOUR NEXT TITANS STORY.

NO *PROBLEM,* KAREN. I GOT AN *IDEA!*

THIS ONE'S *FAN-TASTIC!* IT'S THE GREATEST IDEA SINCE *DC* PUB-LISHED "*THE GEEK*"!

DON'T *WORRY,* GUYS...

I'LL MAKE SURE HIS STORY *WORKS...*

...AS *USUAL.*

AND I HAVE TO *COLOR* HIS BOOK. SHEESH!

I TELL YOU, GEORGE. I MUST BE *BRILLIANT* TO COME UP WITH THESE STORIES. YOU HEAR ME? *BRILLIANT!*

YES, MARV. *OF COURSE,* MARV.

POOR, DELUDED *FOOL.*

DEFINITELY THE END!

5


DC
MINI-SERIES 1 OF 4
Starring
THE NEW TEEN TITANS
TALES OF TITANS®
CYBORG™
60¢
U.K. 20p
NO. 1
JUNE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
REVEALED AT LAST!! THE STARTLING SECRETS OF VICTOR STONE!
'81

FROM THE FIERY DEPTHS OF TRAGEDY COMES THE BIRTH OF A NEW HERO!

CYBORG™

Created by MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PEREZ

THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW YOUNG VICTOR STONE BECAME A STEEL-SMASHING TITAN...

IT IS ALSO THE STORY OF HOW A TROUBLED BOY BECAME A MAN.

MARV WOLFMAN and GEORGE PEREZ
writer - co-creators-artist
BRETT BREEDING
embellisher

JOHN COSTANZA, letterer
ADRIENNE ROY, colorist

LEN WEIN, editor

THE GRAND CANYON STRETCHES LONG AND WIDE BENEATH A DARK AND DUSKY COPPER SKY. THE AIR HERE IS FRESH, UNTAINTED BY CHEMICAL POLLUTANTS, AND THESE SIX YOUNG TITANS FEEL MORE ALIVE TODAY THAN THEY HAVE IN MONTHS...

MAN, THIS WAS ONE GOOD IDEA.

GARFIELD SUGGESTED THIS, VICTOR.

YEP! WE'VE BEEN SO DEPRESSED OF LATE, I THOUGHT SOMEBODY HADDA BECOME OUR OFFICIAL CHEERLEADER.

YOU'RE NOT GONNA HEAR NO FROM ME, PAL.

WE REALLY NEED SOME FUN TIME OFF.

C'MON, THE T-JET'S PARKED ON THE NEXT BUTTE.

YOU KNOW, WHEN WE WERE HERE THE LAST TIME, WE WERE TOO BUSY TO EXPLORE THIS PLACE.

BUT IT'S REALLY LOVELY. IN A WAY IT REMINDS ME OF OKAARA.

THE REST OF THE GANG'S WAITING FOR US THERE.

AND SOON...

SAY, WHERE'S RAVEN? I THOUGHT SHE'D BE WITH YOU?

WELL, IT TOOK KORIAND'R AND ME HALF THE MORNING TO CONVINCE HER TO JOIN US...

...AND THE REST BUYING HER SOME SUITABLE CLOTHES.

I JUST THINK SHE'S A LITTLE BIT SHY ABOUT--

I--I AM HERE, MY FRIENDS. I AM SORRY TO HAVE DELAYED YOU.

NO PROBLEM, RAVEN. I'M JUST GLAD YOU CAME.

HEY, YOU LOOK GREAT IN THAT.

TH-THANK YOU, WALLACE.

2

WELL, WAS I RIGHT OR WAS I *RIGHT?*

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL...*RELAXING.* NOW ISN'T THIS *BETTER* THAN BEATING UP ON *BAD GUYS?*

BESIDES, THE SCENERY HERE JUST CAN'T BE *BEAT.*

HOW'S THE *FIRE* DOING, DICK?

WELL, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I WAS A *BOY SCOUT.*

Y'KNOW, DONNA, I'M REALLY GOING TO *ENJOY* THIS WEEK.

CHOW TIME, GUYS AND GALS. FOOD'S GOING ON THE PIT.

SUCCULENT MORSELS COOKED THE WAY YOU *LIKE* 'EM...

...PROVIDING YOU *LIKE* 'EM THE WAY I *COOK* 'EM.

DID YOU ONLY BRING *MEAT?* I--I DON'T *EAT* THAT.

I-I'M SORRY, RAVEN, I DIDN'T *KNOW.*

LOOK, I'LL PICK UP SOME *VEGETABLES* AT *LEE'S FERRY*, OKAY?

IT'LL ONLY TAKE A *SECOND.*

NOW, I DON'T EXPECT *MEDALS* FOR COMING UP WITH THIS, BUT I GOTTA SAY THIS IS THE WAY FRIENDS *SHOULD* SPEND THEIR TIME, RIGHT?

FRIENDS...

Y'KNOW, WE'VE BEEN SO *BUSY* LATELY I HADN'T EVEN *THOUGHT* OF FRIENDS.

THOUGH I THINK WHEN I BECAME THIS GALVANIZED *FREAK*, I *LOST* ALL MY OLD FRIENDS.

YOU MUST BE *WRONG*, VICTOR. TRUE FRIENDS DON'T DESERT YOU BECAUSE OF AN *ACCIDENT.*

TRUE FRIENDS...YEAH, THEY *DON'T.* MAYBE I JUST NEVER *HAD* ANY TRUE FRIENDS...

3

YEAH. IT TOOK A LONG TIME 'FORE I FIGGERED OUT *WHO* MY REAL FRIENDS WERE.

"Y'GOTTA UNDERSTAN', MY PARENTS LOVED ME, SURE...

"I PLAYED IN THEIR LAB WHILE THEY TINKERED WITH THEIR COMPUTERS.

"THEY WERE SEARCHIN' FOR WAYS TO BOOST INTELLI-GENCE BACK THEN...

"...BUT THEY WERE BUSY THEN, WORKIN' FOR A UNIVERSITY AS RESEARCH SCIEN-TISTS.

"...AN' ME... WELL, I GUESS I WAS *HANDY*. THEY PROBED ME, TESTED ME, WIRED ME UP, AND GOD KNOWS WHAT ELSE.

"SOMETIMES I THOUGHT I WAS MORE A GUINEA PIG THAN A SON TO THEM..."

...THERE ARE 7.8 MEV PER SECOND OF GAMMA ENERGY, AND 3 X 10^9 NEUTRONS PER SECOND...

VERY *GOOD*, VICTOR. YOU *UNDERSTAND* ALL THAT?

YES, DADDY. C'N WE GO OUT AN' *PLAY* NOW?

"YEAH, I HAD A REAL *GOOD* LIFE, FOR A HUMAN *COMPUTER* WITH A 170 I.Q.

YOU WERE A *GENIUS*? WHAT *HAPPENED*, VIC? YOU TAKE TOO MANY *STUPID PILLS*?

REAL *FUNNY*, LOGAN. EVER CONSIDER TAKIN' UP A NEW CAREER--AS A *CORPSE*?

MARSHMALLOWS

4

I FEEL *SORRY* FOR YOU, VICTOR. ON TAMARAN LOVE IS *EVERY-THING*.

DIDN'T YOU EVER HAVE ANY *FUN* WITH YOUR PARENTS?

SURE I DID, SHORT-PANTS. I TOLD YOU, THEY *LOVED* ME.

WE *WENT* PLACES.

"I REMEMBER ONE YEAR IT WAS THE CIRCUS. ONCE OR TWICE A BALL GAME.

"BUT, ROBBIE, THOSE WERE REALLY EXCEPTIONS.

"NOW, THEY DIDN'T DREAM THEY MIGHT BE HURTIN' ME.

"BUT THEY KEPT PUSHIN', TEACHIN', AN' I KEPT LEARNIN'. THAT WAS THE WAY IT MOSTLY WAS."

OKAY, GROUP, COME AND *GET* IT. DOGS AND BURGERS ALL *DONE*.

RAVEN, YOUR *SOY-BURGER'S* ALMOST FINISHED.

DID YOU *RESENT* YOUR PARENTS, VICTOR?

YEAH... AND *NO*, KORY.

GUESS I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS *MISSIN'*.

BESIDES, THEY DID SHOW THEIR *LOVE* TO ME, TOO.

STILL, IT SEEMS SO *SAD*.

A CHILD SHOULD ONLY BE BUBBLING WITH *HAPPINESS*, DON'T YOU THINK?

I THINK I KNEW IT AS I GREW *OLDER*.

"BY THE TIME I WAS EIGHT, I STARTED SNEAKIN' OUT AT NIGHT. JUST TO SEE WHAT I WAS MISSIN'.

"DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS SEARCHIN' FOR, AN' FRANKLY, I DIDN'T MUCH CARE.

REVUE
DIRTY DINGUS McGEE
FRANK SINATRA
ALSO: WILLIAM HOLDEN
THE WILD BUNCH
BUS STOP

'Y'SEE, JUST BEIN' OUT WAS FINE.

"I HAD PRIVATE TUTORS, SO I NEVER WENT TO PUBLIC SCHOOL. NEVER MUCH WENT OUT AT ALL.

"AN' NOT KNOWIN' STUFF ALMOST PROVED THE DEATH OF ME."

WATCH OUT, YOU CRAZY KID!

"I STOOD THERE LIKE SOME FOOL STARIN' AT THE HEAD-LIGHTS.

"I COULDN'T EVEN MOVE, I WAS SO SCARED.

"THEN I FELT SOMETHIN' HIT ME. I FELL BACK.

"TOOK A SECOND TO REALIZE IT WASN'T THE CAR THAT SMASHED INTO ME."

MAN, YOU A FREAKIN' JERK OR SOMETHIN'? WHY YOU JUS' STANDIN' THERE, HUH?

C'MON, BOY, ANSWER ME.

YOU SAVED ME?

SURE, BOY, COULDN'T LET A BROTHER GO SPLAT, COULD I?

HEY, THE TAG'S RON... RON EVERS. WHAT THEY CALL YOU, BOY?

AND THAT'S HOW I MET MY FIRST FRIEND.

AND TO A RESTLESS, WITHDRAWN KID LIKE I WAS, RON SEEMED TO BE WHAT LIFE WAS ALL ABOUT.

HE MADE EVERY-THING FUN. SO NATCH, WHATEVER HE DID, I DID.

"TILL THE COPS CAUGHT ME."

I'M SORRY, MR. AND MRS. STONE. BUT HE AND HIS FRIENDS WERE FOUND LOOTING A GROCERY STORE.

"DAD DIDN'T SAY A WORD THE WHOLE TRIP HOME. HE JUST SENT ME TO MY ROOM.

"MAN, I HAD NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THAT BEFORE. I WAS SO SCARED WONDERING WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO TO ME.

"BUT HE NEVER CAME TO ME. ONLY MY MOM DID."

VICTOR--?

I'M SORRY, MOM. I REALLY AM. I WON'T DO IT AGAIN.

YOUR FATHER AND I LOVE YOU, VICTOR, WE HONESTLY DO. AND SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS SO... DISAPPOINTING.

PERHAPS WE'VE PUSHED YOU TOO MUCH...

NOT YOU, MOM. IT'S DAD. I DON'T WANT SCIENCE. I JUST WANT TO DO WHAT I WANT.

AND ALL WE WANT IS FOR YOU TO BE HAPPY. TO BE GOOD.

MOM, I DON'T KNOW ANY KIDS. DO I HAVE TO HAVE A TUTOR? CAN'T I GO TO SCHOOL WITH EVERYONE ELSE?

LOOK WHAT ASSOCIATING WITH OTHERS HAS ALREADY DONE, VICTOR. YOU'VE BECOME A HOOLIGAN.

BY GOD, SON. YOU'VE GOT THE STUFF OF BRILLIANCE.

WHY DO YOU INSIST ON RUINING YOURSELF?

I'VE HAD SUCH GREAT DREAMS FOR YOU.

I THINK THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I TRULY FELT HATE FOR HIM. HE HAD DREAMS, BUT HE NEVER ONCE THOUGHT THAT MAYBE I HAD SOME, TOO.

7

MOM TALKED HIM INTO LETTIN' ME GO TO *PUBLIC SCHOOL*. AN' THERE I GOT INTO *SPORTS*.

"AN' I FINALLY FOUND SOMETHIN' THAT GAVE ME SOME INNER SATISFACTION...

"'SIDES, *PUBERTY* DID WONDERS FOR ME; I MET *MARCY*. WELL, WHATEVER'S *HAPPENED* BETWEEN US SINCE THEN...

"...AT *THAT* POINT WE WERE REAL TIGHT.

"AN' THOUGH I DIDN'T RUN WITH RON'S GANG ANY MORE, HE WAS STILL MY BEST FRIEND.

"WELL, MY SECOND BEST FRIEND.

8

"OF COURSE, NOT EVERY-THIN' WAS GOIN' GREAT."

GOIN' OUT AGAIN? YOU'RE FALLING BEHIND IN YOUR STUDIES.

SO?

I DON'T CARE, DAD.

VICTOR, I FORBID YOU TO RUN WITH THOSE... ANIMALS! I DID NOT RAISE YOU TO BE SHOT DOWN ON SOME STREET CORNER.

NO, YOU LISSEN TO ME, MAN. WHAT YOU SAY DOESN'T MATTER ANY MORE.

I SEE HOW YOU SUCK UP TO 'THE MAN'! BUILDIN' THOSE WEAPONS FOR S.T.A.R.

VICTOR, I FORBID--

ME, I'M GOING TO DO THINGS MY WAY, AN' WHAT YOU SAY DON'T MATTER NO HOW.

SAVE IT, OLD MAN. I AIN'T LISSENIN'.

LORD, WHEN DID WE LOSE HIM?

WE'VE PUSHED HIM SO HARD, SILAS, NEVER ONCE WONDER-ING IF WE WERE DOING RIGHT.

BLACK POWER

I'M SO AFRAID OF HIM, ELINORE. YOU EVER WATCH HIM?

HE'S PURE BUNDLED-UP ENERGY WAITING TO EXPLODE.

HE HASN'T ANY PATIENCE. I--I DON'T THINK HE'LL EVER BE A SCIENTIST...

BUT HE'S GOOD AT SPORTS. HE LOVES THEM, TOO.

SPORTS? THAT'S A WASTE OF ALL THAT BRIL-LIANCE... AN UTTER WASTE OF ALL THAT TALENT.

"I HADN'T SEEN RON FOR A WHILE, DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE WAS BACK FROM REFORM SCHOOL, UNTIL..."

HEY, VIC! HOW'S THINGS GOIN' DOWN, MAN?

RON? GOOD SEEIN' YOU, PAL. HOW YOU BEEN?

9

NOT BAD, M'MAN. BUT ME AN' THE BOYS COULD SURE USE YOUR MUSCLE.

WE GOT OURSELVES A RUMBLE GOIN' TONIGHT WITH A WHITE GANG CALLED "THE HAWKS".

RUMBLE? NO THANKS, PAL. NOT MY STYLE ANY MORE.

YOU CHICKEN, BOY? YOU FORGET YOU OWE ME?

WE'RE GETTIN' IT FROM BOTH SIDES, BOY-- EVEN THE COPS ARE COMIN' DOWN ON US 'CAUSE WE'RE BLACK.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT, RON. THAT DOESN'T MEAN...

IT MEANS EVERY-THING, VICTOR-- EVERYTHING!

MY FATHER WAS PASSED OVER FOR PROMOTION FOR SOME WHITE DUDE.

THE COLOR OF OUR SKIN MARKS US, VIC. AN' LIKE MY FATHER SAYS, MAYBE WE SHOULD START DOIN' SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

I DON'T KNOW, HONEY. THIS ISN'T MY KIND A FIGHT.

BET YOU CAN GUESS WHAT HAPPENED. I WAS INSULATED AS A KID AND I DIDN'T GROW UP HATING ANYONE BECAUSE OF COLOR--

--BUT RON WAS MY FRIEND, AND MARCY WAS MY GIRL.

"'SIDES, I DIDN'T THINK A LITTLE FIGHT WOULD HURT ANYONE--

"-- TILL I GOT THERE AND SAW THEIR KNIVES.

"MAN, I FREAKED OUT WHEN I GOT CUT AN' SAW MY BLOOD DRIPPIN' OUT.

"I FOUGHT BACK WITH EVERYTHIN' I HAD...

"PEOPLE DIDN'T MATTER THEN. COLOR DIDN'T MATTER.

"I JUST WANTED TO KILL.

TURN 'ROUND, BLACK BOY, AN'--

AN', NOTHIN', WHITEY.

RON?

GUESS YOU OWE ME 'GAIN, VIC, EH?

KRAK

"I NODDED, NEVER THINKING I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THERE 'CEPT FOR RON.

"'COURSE, I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO THINK, 'CAUSE JUST THEN..."

WEEOOOEEEOOOEEEO

SIRENS!

FORGET THE HAWKS! SPLIT!

"SOMEHOW I MADE IT BACK HOME...

"...LOOKIN' LIKE SOMETHING THE CAT WOULD'VE BURIED."

YOU ASKED WHY I'VE BEEN SO HARD ON HIM, ELINORE?

I SWORE I WOULDN'T CALL HIM MY SON IF HE WOUND UP THIS WAY...

...AND I MEANT IT!

WHY, VICTOR? FOR GOD'S SAKE, I THOUGHT ALL THIS WAS OVER.

HEY, IT'S HIS FAULT, MOM. ALWAYS PUSHIN' ME. ALWAYS PUTTIN' ME DOWN.

NO! DON'T BLAME YOUR FATHER. HE DIDN'T CUT YOU WITH THAT KNIFE.

YOU HAD FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

BUT, MOM--

DON'T DARE GIVE ME ANY 'BUTS,' VICTOR. NOBODY TOOK YOUR HAND AND PUSHED YOU INTO THIS. NOBODY BUT YOU.

YOU WANTED PUBLIC SCHOOL, WE GAVE IT TO YOU. YOU WANTED SPORTS, WE DIDN'T STOP YOU.

YOU COULD HAVE GONE ANYWHERE, DONE ANYTHING...

...BUT YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM TRULY IS? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT.

YOUR FATHER WAS RIGHT. THERE IS ANGER INSIDE YOU.

BUT, DAMN IT, DON'T EVER AIM THAT ANGER AT US, VICTOR.

AIM IT WHERE IT BELONGS -- AT YOURSELF, FOR RUINING EVERY OPPORTUNITY YOU'VE HAD.

MOM WAS CRYIN' WHEN SHE SAID THAT. IT MUST'VE TORN OUT HER HEART TO GET MAD AT ME.

BUT BACK THEN ALL I GOT WAS ANGRY. I STOMPED OUT.

"MORE TIME PASSED. I WAS 17 NOW, AN' I GOT THIS CALL FROM RON TO HURRY OVER.

"HE LIVED IN THIS TENEMENT ON 126TH STREET."

DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MAKE IT, VIC. C'MON IN.

WHAT'S UP, RON?

FREEDOM, MAN. HOW WE DON'T HAVE NO FREEDOM. HOW THE HONKIES KEEP PUTTIN' US DOWN...

...HOW WE CAN'T GET NOWHERE. SO WE DECIDED TO TAKE OVER LITTLE MISS WHITE LIBERTY--

-- AN' TELL THE WORLD HOW BAD WE GOT IT... AN' HOW MUCH WE WANT.

AN' YOU, LITTLE BROTHER, YOU SPEAK BETTER THAN US. SO WE WANT YOU TO TALK FOR US.

NO, RON. I WON'T DO IT.

YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT ALL THIS.

AND THIS TIME I WON'T HELP YOU MAKE A MISTAKE.

12

YOU'RE LETTING YOUR OWN HATE *CONSUME* YOU, RON.

EASY FOR *YOU* TO SAY, MAN. YOU GOT A *SCHOLARSHIP* FOR COLLEGE YOUR OLD MAN ARRANGED... YOU GOT IT *ALL*.

JUST STOP IT RIGHT THERE, RON. NOBODY *GAVE* ME THAT SCHOLARSHIP. I WORKED DAMN *HARD* FOR THAT.

MY DAD *FOUGHT* ME, WOULDN'T GIVE ME A *PENNY* UNLESS I MAJORED IN *SCIENCE*.

BUT I *PROVED* MYSELF. I WORKED AN' GOT WHAT I WANTED.

ANYONE CAN DO THAT, RON-- AND THE COLOR OF YOUR *SKIN* DOESN'T MATTER ONE DAMN BIT.

YOU WALK OUTTA HERE AN' WE AIN'T *FRIENDS* NO MORE. YOU *HEAR* THAT, MAN? *YOU HEAR THAT?*

YOU HEAR THAT?

RON, I HEAR IT.

AND THAT'S *YOUR* DECISION, NOT *MINE*.

YOU REJECTED HIS *VIOLENCE*. YOU WERE GROWING UP.

MAYBE, RAVEN. BUT INSIDE I WAS SO MAD.

BUT I KNEW WHAT WAS RIGHT FOR ME.

WHAT *HAPPENED* TO THIS RON?

THE *COPS* GOT 'IM SOON'S HE CLIMBED THE STATUE.

HE SPENT ALMOST A YEAR IN *PRISON*...

... WHILE I WENT ON TO *COLLEGE*... WORKIN' MY BUTT OFF TO MAKE THE *OLYMPICS*.

13

"THEN, ONE DAY WHILE I WAS HEADING HOME AFTER DOIN' MY DAILY TWENTY, I DECIDED TO STOP AN' SEE MY MOM.

STAR

"GOD HELP ME, I DIDN'T KNOW THEN THAT I'D NEVER SEE HER AGAIN..."

YOUR PARENTS ARE UP IN THE EIGHTH FLOOR LAB.

USA

THANKS, HANK.

"MY PARENTS WERE INVOLVED IN TWO DIFFERENT RESEARCH JOBS--ONE WAS A WEAPONS SYSTEM FOR THE ARMY...

"...THE OTHER WAS STRAIGHT RESEARCH ON DIMENSION-PROBING FOR S.T.A.R.

"HOW FAR THEY GOT IN BOTH AREAS I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL I HAD OPENED THE LAB DOOR...

"I DIDN'T SEE MY MOM, BUT I KNEW SHE WAS THERE, SCREAMING OUT IN AGONY, HALF-CONSUMED BY THAT STINKING, FILTHY THING--

"--THAT DAMNED BLASPHEMY FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION.

"THE CREATURE--GOD, IT TURNED TO ME, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I WAS SO SCARED, SO VERY SCARED...

"THE FETID THING OOZED OVER ME. I FELT MY FLESH BURN AT ITS SLIMY TOUCH... I FELT MY BONES DISSOLVE RIGHT INSIDE MY BODY...

"MY FATHER LATER TOLD ME THAT HE CRAWLED IN STARK TERROR ACROSS THE LAB ROOM...

"...HE COULDN'T EVEN THINK STRAIGHT, BUT HE PUNCHED THE RECALL BUTTON ON THE COMPUTER...

"...THEN BRACED HIMSELF, AS THAT MURDERING CREATURE WAS SUCKED BACK INTO ITS OWN DIMENSION.

"THE COMPUTER BLEW UP AS IT SLIPPED THROUGH.

14

"YOU KNOW, MY MOM WAS SUCH A GOOD, LOVING PERSON, BUT THERE WAS NO ONE TO MOURN FOR HER. NO ONE BUT MY FATHER...

"AND WHILE I WAS LYING THERE IN THAT HOSPITAL, DYING, HE MUST HAVE SWORN THAT I WOULD NOT JOIN HER.

"I TOLD YOU MY FATHER WAS WORKING ON WEAPONS FOR THE ARMY. ONE OF THEM WAS A CYBERNETIC SUIT...

"...DESIGNED FOR SOLDIERS WHOSE BODIES WERE DESTROYED IN WAR.

"THE BODY-PARTS WEREN'T AUTHORIZED FOR USE, BUT MY FATHER DIDN'T CARE...

"...AND FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS, WHILE I WAS TOTALLY UNCONSCIOUS, HE WORKED DAY AND NIGHT ON THE DELICATE SKIN-TO-METAL GRAFTING PROCESS.

"BONE WAS REPLACED WITH STEEL. FLESH WITH SPECIAL POLYMERS. VEINS AND ARTERIES WERE ENCASED IN PLASTIC TUBINGS, AND METAL STRAPS BOUND IT ALL TOGETHER...

"PIECE BY PIECE, I WAS RE-BUILT.

"A MODERN PROMETHEUS, MY FATHER THOUGHT.

"A LATTER DAY FRANKENSTEIN WAS MORE LIKE IT.

15

"A MONTH WENT BY BEFORE I WAS CONSCIOUS AGAIN. A MONTH BEFORE MY BODY HAD FINALLY ACCEPTED THE GRAFTING, BEFORE MY BODY SHOOK WITH STINGING SPASMS...

"A MONTH BEFORE I SAW THAT THOUGH I STILL LIVED...

...I WOULD NEVER AGAIN BE THE SAME!"

OH, MY GOD! MY GOD! WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?!?

16

I CAN *IMAGINE* WHAT YOU MUST HAVE BEEN *THINKING.*

WERE YOU VERY *FRIGHTENED,* VICTOR?

I DON'T THINK I CAN *DESCRIBE* HOW I FELT, GOLDIE.

THE *PAIN* MUST HAVE BEEN *TERRIBLE.*

"*PAIN? NO, RAVEN. THERE WASN'T ANY PAIN. I WAS TOTALLY NUMB. NUMB AN' ANGRY.*"

WHAT DID YOU *DO* TO ME?

I SAVED YOUR *LIFE,* SON. YOUR BODY WAS *HALF-DESTROYED.*

AND I GRAFTED YOU INTO AN EXPERIMENTAL *STEEL BODY.*

BUT, IF MY THEORY IS *CORRECT,* YOU'LL BE BETTER THAN *NEW* WHEN YOU--

'*THEORY*'? MY GOD, EVEN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS ALL I AM IS A DAMNED HUMAN *GUINEA PIG!*

YOU NEVER THOUGHT OF ME AS YOUR *SON,* DID YOU?

VICTOR, I--

JUST *SHUT UP,* OLD MAN. ALL MY LIFE YOU'VE *USED* ME, FORCED ME TO BE WHAT YOU *WANTED* ME TO BE.

AND ALL MY LIFE I *FOUGHT* YOU. BUT YOU *WON,* DIDN'T YOU?

CURSE YOU, MAN-- I'M *EXACTLY* WHAT YOU WANT NOW!

I *HATE* YOU, OLD MAN! I *HATE* YOU!

DAMN IT, WHY DIDN'T YOU LET ME JUST *DIE?*

WHY COULDN'T YOU LET ME *DIE!?!?*

17

"FIVE MONTHS I WAS IN THAT HOSPITAL! FIVE MONTHS FEELIN' LIKE SOME KINDA FREAK! EVERYTHIN' I ONCE KNEW I HADDA RELEARN. YOU IMAGINE WHAT I FELT LIKE HAVING TO FIGGER OUT HOW TO WALK AGAIN?

MARCH 13

APRIL 17

APR. 20

"YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE NOT EVEN BEIN' ABLE TO HOLD SOMETHIN' WITHOUT CRUSHIN' IT?

MAY 6

"I USEDTA RUN A MILE IN FOUR MINUTES, TWENTY. BUT NOW I COULDN'T EVEN WALK.

E

MAY 13

"I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO ADJUST TO MY NEW STRENGTH.

"EVERYTHING WAS LIKE A LIVING HELL TO ME. RELEARNIN', READJUSTIN', STARTIN' FROM SCRATCH.

MAY

JUNE 9

"FIVE MONTHS IT TOOK. FIVE LONG, LONELY MONTHS BEFORE I COULD HOLD AN EGG IN MY HAND AGAIN.

JUNE 26

"FIVE MONTHS SPENDIN' EVERY HOUR WITH THE MAN I HATED MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE WORLD...

JULY 4

JULY 20

"...THE MAN WHO FORCED ME TO LEARN TO BE A PERSON ONCE AGAIN.

61

18

"FIVE MONTHS BEFORE I HAD THE COURAGE TO WALK OUT-SIDE. AN' WHEN I FINALLY DID, THINGS WERE NO BETTER.

FELT THEIR EYES BORING INTO ME. FEAR, HATE. IT HURT SO MUCH. BUT NEVER SO MUCH AS WHEN KIDS RAN AWAY FROM ME.

"I WAS A MONSTER. A BLASTED FRANKENSTEIN. AND I CURSED MY FATHER ALL OVER AGAIN FOR NOT LETTING ME DIE.

"FINALLY, I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANY LONGER..."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, VICTOR?

GETTIN' OUTTA HERE, OLD MAN. SEEIN' YOU EVERY DAY MAKES ME HATE YOU AN' ME EVEN MORE THAN I ALREADY DO.

BUT WE'RE NOT FINISHED WITH YOUR TRAINING, VICTOR. THERE ARE STILL TESTS--

STUFF YOUR TESTS, OLD MAN.

I DON'T CARE IF MY BODY REJECTS THIS STEEL GARBAGE CAN YOU'VE TURNED ME INTO.

I DON'T CARE IF I DIE.

AND I DON'T CARE IF I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN!

"HE SAID NOTHING. AND I HATED HIM EVEN MORE FOR THAT. OF COURSE I DIDN'T KNOW THEN HOW MUCH HE CARED, OR HOW MUCH HE REALLY LOVED ME...

"SO I MOVED OUT. MOVED TO HELL'S KITCHEN.

"IN A RATHOLE LIKE THAT, ONE MORE GODFORSAKEN LOSER WOULDN'T BE NOTICED.

19

"NOW, I'D STAYED PRETTY MUCH TO MYSELF FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, UNTIL..."

NOK! NOK!

V. STONE

KEEP YER SHIRT ON!

AN' IF IT'S YOU, GREELY, YOU'LL GET MY RENT CHECK NEXT WEEK.

SO QUIT HASSLIN' ME, MAN.

"BUT IT WASN'T MY LIQUOR-BREATHED LAND-LORD...

RON? HOW'D YOU FIND ME, MAN?

HEY, BRO, SOME WAY TO SAY HEY TO YOUR NUMERO UNO AMIGO!

HEARD YOU WENT THROUGH THE WRINGER. LOOKS BAD, BOY-- REAL BAD.

HURT, MAN?

ONLY WHEN I LAUGH. WHAT DO YOU WANT, RON?

ME? BRO, YOU GOT YOURSELF ONE SUSPICIOUS MIND. JUST AFTER GOODNESS AN' JUSTICE, MAN.

TALK ENGLISH AN' TALK PLAIN. I DON'T LIKE WASTING MY TIME ANY MORE.

OKAY, BOY, YOU GOT IT! IT WAS THE MAN THAT DID YOU IN. THE MAN DOES US ALL IN, BRO.

WELL, I TIED IN WITH SOME REAL GOOD FOLK NOW, -- NO MORE TAKIN' OVER STATUES.

WE'RE GOIN' AFTER THE BIG TARGET, MAN--THE UNITED NATIONS.

AN' WE'RE GOIN' AFTER IT WITH DYN-O-MITE!

FIGGERED AFTER WHAT THE MAN DID TO YOU, YOU'D WANNA DO IT RIGHT BACK, BOY-- BACK WHERE IT HURTS!

YOU STUPID IDIOT. MY FATHER DID THIS TO ME, NO WHITE MAN. AND EVEN IF IT WAS A WHITE MAN-- HE WOULD BE THE GUY I'D GET--

--NOT EVERYONE JUST 'CAUSE 'A HIS SKIN.

'SIDES, I DON'T NEED TROUBLE. 'CAUSE VIC STONE'S COMIN' BACK.

DON'T BELIEVE IT, BOY. WHITEY 'LL PUT YOU DOWN SO FAST YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT HIT YOU.

THEN YOU'LL COME BACK TO ME, BOY--TO YOUR REAL FRIEND.

'REAL FRIENDS'! RON LEFT AN' I FELT *ALONE*. FINALLY I DECIDED TO CALL *MARCY*.

'SCUSE ME, MARCY HOME? IT'S *VIC STONE*.

OH? YOU THINK SHE'LL BE *'ROUND* FRIDAY NIGHT?

SATURDAY?

MEBBE *NEXT* WEEK?

UHH, YEAH, OKAY. LOOK, MEBBE I'LL *CALL BACK*--

"*MARCY WASN'T GOIN' TO BE AVAILABLE AGAIN.*

"*NOT FOR A FREAK WHO LOOKED LIKE ME.*

"*BUT I WASN'T GONNA BE PUT DOWN. I WAS CLIMBIN' UP AGAIN. I WENT BACK TO SCHOOL.*"

WHAT DO YOU MEAN I'M NOT ON THE *TEAM* ANY MORE, COACH?

I WAS THE *BEST* YOU HAD. YOU SAID SO YOURSELF.

I'M SORRY, VICTOR. YOU CAN'T PLAY ON THE TEAM. YOU *KNOW* THAT.

YOU'RE NOT *NORMAL* ANY MORE. WITH THOSE STEEL ARMS AND LEGS -- YOU CAN OUTDO *ANYONE*. THE RULES COMMITTEE WON'T HAVE IT.

BUT IT'S *MORE* THAN THAT, VICTOR. IT'S ALSO YOUR *GRADES*.

NEWARK CITY COLLEGE ATHLETICS

KUNITSKY

OUT

BEFORE YOUR ACCIDENT THEY FELL TOO *LOW* TO CONTINUE YOUR *SCHOLARSHIP*.

I'M *SORRY*, VIC. I REALLY AM.

"YOU *BELIEVE* THAT? *MY* GRADES WERE TOO LOW! *ME*! I WAS CERTIFIED A *BLAMED* GENIUS WITH A 170 I.Q.

"*I GOT THE POINT.*

"*EVERYTHIN' STARTED T'LOOK BAD. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.*"

WHITEY CAME *DOWN* ON YA, HUH?

YEAH... GOOD-BYE.

WELL, BOY, YOUR REAL FRIENDS WOULDN'T *DO* THAT. NO WAY, MAN.

WHAT DO YOU *WANT*, RON?

PAL, YOU LISSEN *CLOSE*. TONIGHT WE'RE MAKIN' *HISTORY*!

"I WENT TO GET READY.

"GET MY STUFF TOGETHER.

"I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO.

"AN' THERE WAS NO WAY AROUND IT.

"IT WAS 'BOUT THREE IN THE MORNING. GUARDS HAD COMPLETED THEIR TOUR AN' WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BUILDIN'.

"NOW, I WAS SUPPOSED TO SHOW UP AT 3:15. BUT I WAS EARLY."

"BUT THE OTHERS WERE ALREADY CLIMBIN' THE BUILDIN'. I DIDN'T QUESTION THAT THEN, MEBBE I SHOULD'A.

"NOT THAT IT WOULD'A MATTERED.

RON, THE BOMB'S SET. THIS IS GOOD EQUIPMENT.

MR. 'K' WOULDN'T HAVE ANY-THIN' LESS, PAL.

WE SET THIS THING TO BLOW SOON AS VIC SHOWS UP.

THEN WE SPLIT--

--AN' LET HIM BE OUR SCAPEGOAT...

...WHILE WE'RE COOLIN' OUR HEELS IN MR. K'S COUNTRY.

"USING FOOT-GRAPPLERS I CLIMBED THE OUTER WALL...

"...EVEN AS MY EAR AMPLIFIERS PICKED UP RON'S EVERY TREACHEROUS WORD.

"THOUGH NOTHING COULD HAVE CHANGED."

HE'S COMING.

SET IT FOR FIVE MINUTES. THAT'LL GIVE US TIME TO GET CLEAR.

05:00

22

IT'S *TOO LATE* FOR THAT, RON.

WHAT IN SWEET HEAVEN?

WH-WHAT *IS* IT?

VICTOR?!?

BEFORE I CAME HERE I HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO *STOP* YOU, RON.

I KNEW IN MY GUT THIS WAS *WRONG.*

DAMN YOUR GUT, MAN. YOU THINK I CARE 'BOUT *YOU*, BOY?

WE NEEDED A *SCAPEGOAT*, BOY. AND YOU IS *ELECTED.*

YOU *STILL* IS!

I DON'T *THINK* SO, SCREWBALL.

UNLESS YOUR *BULLETS* CAN STOP ME, AND THEY *CAN'T.*

BAM

BA

KRUNK!

I'M ENCASED IN *MOLYBDENUM STEEL.* NOTHIN' CAN STOP ME.

YOU'RE *BAD NEWS*, RON. YOU ALWAYS *WERE.*

ALWAYS BLAMIN' SOMEONE *ELSE*, TOO. WHEN WE WERE KIDS, YOU BLAMED THE *ADULTS.*

WHEN WE GOT OLDER, EVERY PROBLEM IN THE WORLD WAS CAUSED BY THE *WHITES.*

SICKNESS DOESN'T KNOW *COLOR*, MAN. AND YOU'VE BEEN TWISTED *SICK* RIGHT FROM THE START!

SPAK

THUD!

BUT YOU'RE NOT USIN' THE *U.N.*--YOU'RE NOT BLOWIN' *THIS* PLACE SKY-HIGH.

NOT YOU OR YOUR MR. K, *WHO-EVER* HE IS.

23

VICTOR, WE'LL GIVE YOU *CASH*. MR. K'S GOT *MILLIONS*.

HE'S GOT A WHOLE BLAMED *COUNTRY*. HE'S GOT--

YAGHHHH

OH, MY GOD!

I--I *TRIPPED*, VICTOR-- *SAVE* ME. *PLEASE*...

YOU'RE *SCUM*, RON, BUT I *WON'T* LET YOU--

HOLD IT, MAN!

YOUR *BOMB*-- SOMEHOW IT GOT *JOSTLED*!

THE COMPUTER JUMPED ITS *COUNTDOWN TIME*.

00:00:06

INSTEAD OF BLOWING IN *MINUTES*, IT'S GOING OFF IN *SECONDS*!

FOR GOD'S SAKE, VIC-- *SAVE* ME!

YOU *OWE* ME, VICTOR. I SAVED YOUR LIFE-- *TWICE*!

YOU OWE ME!

"RON OR THE U.N.-- I HAD FIVE SECONDS TO DECIDE.

:00:05

"IT DIDN'T EVEN TAKE ONE!

"NO BLASTED *TERRORIST* WAS GOING TO DESTROY THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF *MILLIONS*.

I DON'T *OWE* YOU, RON. MAYBE I OWE THE KID YOU WERE *BEFORE* YOU SCARRED YOURSELF BEYOND REASON.

0:03

BUT NOT *YOU*, RON-- NOT *YOU*.

"I INTENDED TO SAVE RON ONCE THE BOMB WAS CLEAR OF THE U.N....

"...BUT HE COULDN'T HOLD ON LONG ENOUGH.

"I'M CERTAIN HE SCREAMED AS HE FELL, BUT HE WAS DROWNED OUT BY THE ROAR OF THE DRAGON...

"...WHO CONSUMED ITSELF IN ITS OWN FLAMING PYRE.

THE COPS COMBED THE RIVER BUT COULDN'T FIND RON'S *BODY*, THOUGH I'M SURE HE *DIED* THEN...

...KILLED BY HIS OWN *HATE*, JUST LIKE MINE WAS KILLING *ME*.

UNTIL YOU PEOPLE FORCED ME TO LISTEN TO MY *FATHER*.

I--I HAD LET MYSELF *HATE* HIM FOR SO LONG--PERHAPS THINKING THAT BECAUSE HE *WAS* MY FATHER HE SHOULD ALSO BE AN INFALLIBLE *GOD*.

AT LEAST, BECAUSE OF YOU, MY *TRUE* FRIENDS, I CAME TO *LOVE* MY FATHER...

...I LOVED HIM 'TIL THE *MOMENT* HE *DIED*. AS I WILL UNTIL I *JOIN* HIM.

SO YEAH, *REAL* FRIENDS ...I DIDN'T *HAVE* 'EM WHILE I WAS GROWIN' UP.

AN' SOMETIMES I GET A BIT *MISTY-EYED* 'CAUSE I CERTAINLY DO HAVE 'EM *NOW*.

AND WE SHALL *ALWAYS* BE YOUR FRIENDS, VICTOR.

HOW CAN WE *HELP* BUT LOVE ONE WHO IS SUCH A WARM AND LOVING MAN?

WARM AND LOVING... SO *STRANGE* TO HEAR THOSE WORDS...

...CONSIDERING MY WHOLE *LIFE* 'TIL NOW WAS SPENT BEING TAUGHT HOW *NOT* TO LOVE... AND HOW *NOT* TO EVER *CARE*.

NEXT:

25

THE STORY OF RAVEN:


DC
MINI-SERIES 2 OF 4
Starring
THE NEW TEEN
TALES OF TITANS
RAVEN
60¢
U.K. 20p
NO. 2
JULY
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
NOW THEY CAN BE TOLD! THE CHILLING SECRETS OF TRIGON'S DAUGHTER!
GEORGE PEREZ

TALES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS™ RAVEN™

Created by MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ

THEY HAD BEEN SITTING AROUND THE CAMPFIRE TELLING STORIES.

SHE REFUSED.

BUT STORIES HAVE A WAY OF BEING TOLD...

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ
WRITER—CO-PLOTTERS—ARTIST
PABLO MARCOS — INKER
BEN ODA — LETTERER
ADRIENNE ROY — COLORIST
LEN WEIN — EDITOR

TRIGON, WHY ARE YOU *DOING* THIS TO ME?

WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL YOUR *DAUGHTER*?

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND, I'M *PART* OF YOU!

AND YOU'RE A PART OF *ME* THAT I'VE SPENT A LIFETIME TRYING TO *SUBMERGE*!

SPEAK TO ME, TRIGON! WHY DO YOU WANT TO *KILL* YOUR ONLY LIVING *CHILD*?

MY DAUGHTER, YOU WILL NOT *DIE*. I WILL NOT *PERMIT* IT.

MOTHER?!? THANK AZAR! HE WANTS ME *DEAD*!

NO, MY LOVING RAVEN, NOT *DEAD*--

--HE SIMPLY WANTS THAT PART OF YOUR *SOUL* THAT IS RIGHTFULLY *HIS*!

AND I FEAR, MY CHILD, THAT NOT ONE OF US CAN *STOP* HIM!

HA! HA HA! HA HA!

NO! *NO*! MOTHER-- NOT *YOU*!

2

THERE IS NO WAY TO *RESIST* HIM-- AND YET, HOW CAN I LET HIM CLAIM MY *SOUL*?

ONCE TRIGON *POSSESSES* ME, HIS POWER WILL BE *INFINITE*!

HE WILL BE *COMPLETE* AGAIN... *WHOLE* AGAIN!

NO! I MUST *FIGHT* HIM WITH EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING!

THEN LET MY *SOUL-SELF* FLY FREE AND LET HIS OWN POWER BE HIS *UNDOING*!

I *RESIST* YOU, FATHER--

--AND EVEN *MORE*... I WILL *DEFEAT* YOU!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

HA! HA!

NO!

AZAR-- *NO*!

3

MAN! WHAT WAS *THAT?*

THAT WAS *RAVEN'S* SCREAM! I'D KNOW IT *ANYWHERE!*

SOMETHING'S *HAPPENED* TO HER!

*THE OTHERS CAN BARELY **BLINK** BEFORE WALLY WEST IS **GONE** AND STANDING AT THE SIDE OF THE WOMAN HE **LOVES**...*

*THOUGH HIS LOVE HAS NEVER **ONCE** BEEN RETURNED IN KIND.*

WHAT'S *GOING ON* HERE?

RAVEN HAD A *DREAM*, I THINK.

TERRY LONG FAN CLUB

I *AM*... I WILL BE JUST *FINE*.

PLEASE, RAVEN, JUST LET ME KNOW IF YOU'RE *ALL RIGHT*.

NO, RAVEN, THIS TIME YOU'RE *NOT* DISMISSING ME LIKE THAT.

YOU'VE KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT I *LOVE* YOU...

...YOU KNOW I JUST CAN'T GO BACK TO MY TENT AND *FORGET* THAT AWFUL SHRIEK.

YOU'RE *HURT*, RAVEN. YOUR FACE IS SO *PALE*. PLEASE, OPEN UP TO ME JUST *ONCE*.

RAVEN, WE'RE *ALL* YOUR FRIENDS. IF SOMETHING IS *TROUBLING* YOU, MAYBE WE CAN *HELP*.

AND EVEN IF WE *CAN'T*, SOMETIMES JUST *TALKING* ABOUT OUR PAINS MAKES THEM EASIER TO *BEAR*.

YOU ALL *ARE* MY FRIENDS, MY *ONLY* FRIENDS.

PERHAPS I HAVE *ERRED* IN KEEPING SO MUCH OF MY PAST A *SECRET*.

YOU'LL *TELL* US THEN? THANK GOD!

4

YOU KNOW ABOUT *TRIGON*...

KNOW HIM? MAN, HE ALMOST TURNED US INTO *HAMBURGER MEAT!*

GARFIELD-- *SHHHHH!*

I HAVE ALSO TOLD YOU HOW TRIGON MET MY *MOTHER*...

SHE WAS A WOMAN LOST IN HER OWN *CONFUSION* WITH NO CLEAR PRECEPTS OF HER OWN, SHE WAS SWAYED BY THOSE WHO STUDIED THE *ARCANE ARTS*.

...SWAYED? PERHAPS *'USED'* IS A FAR BETTER WORD. SHE ALLOWED HERSELF TO BE USED IN A DARK CEREMONY WHOSE PURPOSE WAS TO RAISE THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF...

"... BUT THIS TIME THE CEREMONY BROUGHT TO THEM SOMETHING FAR DIFFERENT.

"MY MOTHER TOLD ME HE WAS SO HANDSOME, HIS EYES WERE FLECKED WITH GOLD AND DANCED WITH SUNLIGHT...

"... HIS TOUCH WAS WARM, AND SHE MELTED INTO HIS ARMS AND FOUND HERSELF SWEPT ACROSS THE DIMENSIONS.

"SHE BECAME HIS LOVER AND BRIDE, AND MY MOTHER...

"... WHO HAD NEVER BEFORE KNOWN LOVE -- WAS TOTALLY ENTHRALLED...

"... UNTIL SHE SAW BEYOND THE IMAGE TRIGON HAD CONJURED--

"... AND SAW THE DEMON AS HE TRULY WAS!

5

"BUT IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE. HIS SEED HAD BEEN PLANTED.

"HIS CHILD WOULD BE BORN, AND SO TRIGON SIMPLY CAST MY MOTHER BACK TO EARTH WHERE SHE WOULD BE SAFE FROM MY FATHER'S ENEMIES.

...BUT ALL THESE CHILDREN WERE SLAIN UPON BIRTH. MANY BY TRIGON'S FOES, THE OTHERS BY THEIR OWN MOTHERS...

...WHO THEN TOOK THEIR OWN WRETCHED LIVES AS WELL.

BUT THIS TIME TRIGON HAD PICKED HIS WIFE WELL. HE KNEW MY MOTHER WAS TOO WEAK A PERSON TO SLAY HIS CHILD.

SHE DESPERATELY SOUGHT LOVE... EVEN THE LOVE OF THE DEVIL'S OWN.

THIS TIME, TRIGON WAS CERTAIN, AFTER A HUNDRED ATTEMPTS AND MORE, HIS OFFSPRING WOULD LIVE.

I'M SORRY, RAVEN, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. SHE KNEW WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, DIDN'T SHE?

SHE DID.

WASN'T SHE SCARED? WASN'T SHE AFRAID? SHE HAD TO BE.

"FINALLY, SHE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER. SHE TOLD ME SHE TOOK TOO MANY PILLS AND THEN SHE LAY DOWN TO DIE...

INDEED, GARFIELD, THE HORROR OF WHAT WAS GROWING INSIDE HER TOOK MY MOTHER FAR OVER THE BRINK OF DESPAIR.

"... AND SHE WAS SO CERTAIN THAT NIMBUS OF LIGHT THAT APPEARED IN THE ALLEYWAY WAS MERELY A MAD DELUSION...

"... AND THE FIGURE THAT STEPPED FROM IT WAS A MESSENGER FROM GOD TAKING HER TO THE REALM BEYOND.

"SHE TOOK HIS HAND EVEN AS SHE HAD TAKEN TRIGON'S...

"TRIGON HAD MANY WIVES BEFORE MY MOTHER. ALL BORE HIM CHILDREN...

"HE SEEMED SO PEACEFUL AS HE REACHED OUT FOR HER.

"... AND THAT WAS THE LAST TIME SHE EVER SET FOOT ON THE PLANET OF HER BIRTH.

6

"HOW CAN I POSSIBLY DESCRIBE **AZARATH** WHEN I HAVE NEVER TRULY **SEEN** IT? AT LEAST NOT THE WAY IT LOOKED **BEFORE** I WAS BORN.

"MY MOTHER SPOKE OF ITS GLORIOUS MARBLE STREETS AND GOLDEN COLUMNS, ITS BLUE-GREEN SKIES AND CRIMSON CLOUDS.

"IT MUST HAVE BEEN *MAGNIFICENT* THE DAY SHE FIRST ARRIVED."

WHERE *ARE* WE? I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING *LIKE* THIS BEFORE.

AM I *DREAMING*, OR AM I *DEAD*? IS THIS *HEAVEN*?

NO, MY DEAR, THIS IS NOT *HEAVEN*. WE EXIST *BETWEEN* ALL DIMENSIONS.

LONG AGO WE FLED THE *VIOLENCE* OF EARTH AND CAME TO LIVE HERE IN ETERNAL *PEACE*.

WE INVITE YOU TO *FORGET* YOUR PAST AND *LIVE* WITH US.

WE ASK YOU TO *BEGIN ANEW* IN AZARATH... TO EVEN TAKE ANEW A NAME *BEFITTING* YOU--

ARELLA, THAT WHICH MEANS *THE MESSENGER ANGEL*.

BUT WHY *ME*? WHY BRING ME *HERE*?

BECAUSE OF THE *CHILD*. BECAUSE MANKIND MUST BE *PROTECTED* FROM THE WRATH OF *TRIGON'S DAUGHTER*.

HOW DID THEY *KNOW* ABOUT TRIGON?

HOW COULD THEY HAVE FLED THE *EARTH*, DONNA? THEY LEFT ITS CONFINES *CENTURIES* AGO.

I AM *SORRY*, BUT I DO NOT KNOW THE *TRUTH*.

DICK, ALMOST ALL OF US HAVE HAD *TRAGIC CHILDHOODS*. IS THERE NO *HAPPINESS* IN OUR PAST?

I DON'T *KNOW*, KORY. BUT MAYBE THAT'S WHY WE'RE ALL *DRIVEN* SO.

WHAT WE *ARE* COMES FROM WHAT WE *WERE*.

WE KNOW THAT AZARATH WAS *PACIFISTIC*...

...DIDN'T THEY REALIZE THEY MIGHT HAVE TO *FIGHT* TRIGON SOME DAY?

THEY *KNEW*, DONNA, BUT *WHY* THEY DID WHAT THEY DID IS *UNKNOWN* TO ME.

THERE ARE *MANY* MYSTERIES IN AZARATH'S PAST.

*"BUT **WHATEVER** THOSE SECRETS MIGHT BE, MY MOTHER WAS STILL GREETED INTO THEIR SOCIETY.*

"SHE SEEMED LOVED...

*"...THOUGH NOT BY **ALL**. HIS NAME WAS **JURIS** AND HE WAS MAGISTRATE OVER FOOD PRODUCTION.*

"MY MOTHER SAID HE WAS COLD TO HER, SUSPICIOUS OF HER...

"...PERHAPS EVEN FRIGHTENED BY HER AND HER CHILD.

"HE REVEALED HIS FEELINGS TO COMAN, HIGH MAGISTRATE FOR ALL AZARATH..."

DON'T YOU *SEE*, COMAN? THE CHILD IS A CREATION OF *EVIL*.

ONCE IT IS BORN IT WILL *DESTROY* US.

I *BESEECH* YOU. WE FLED EARTH BECAUSE OF *VIOLENCE*. WE HAVE CREATED HERE A VIRTUAL *EDEN*...

...WHY DO YOU BRING TO US ANOTHER *SERPENT*?

AND WHAT WOULD *YOU* HAVE US DO, JURIS? *SLAY* HER?

YOU KNOW THAT IS NOT OUR *WAY*.

8

KILL HER? *NO.* BUT WE CAN CAST HER OUT *THE GREAT DOOR* INTO THE LIMBO BEYOND WHERE THE CHILD WILL NEVER CAUSE OUR *DESTRUCTION.*

WE *CANNOT,* JURIS.

INDEED, THE CHILD'S ONLY *HOPE* IS TO REMAIN IN AZARATH WHERE OUR TEACHINGS CAN *SUBMERGE* TRIGON'S DEADLY INFLUENCE.

I *WARN* YOU, JURIS-- DO *NOTHING* AGAINST ARELLA.

WE OF THE HIGH COUNCIL HAVE MADE OUR *DECISION.*

AND THE *REST* OF US WILL *DIE* BECAUSE OF IT.

IT WAS INTO THIS CLIMATE I WAS *BORN.*

"MONTHS PASSED, THEN MY MOTHER WENT INTO LABOR. AND, WITH A QUIET SIGH, I EMERGED INTO AZARATH.

"BUT FROM THAT MOMENT ON, AZARATH WAS FOREVER CHANGED. ITS EMERALD SKIES TURNED BLACK AS DEATH ITSELF.

"OUR WORLD SHOOK AND RUMBLED IN PROTEST.

"AND PEACE TURNED TO FEAR.

"JURIS BELIEVED HE KNEW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE TO THE HELPLESS INFANT...

"THE SWEET SMELL OF GOSSAMER BECAME THE PUNGENT ODOR OF BRIMSTONE.

"LIFE BECAME DEATH.

*"...WHO HAD NOT **ASKED** TO BECOME THIS CATALYST OF TERROR..."*

WHY DID EVERYTHING CHANGE, RAVEN? SURELY YOUR BIRTH *ALONE* WASN'T RESPONSIBLE...

IT *WAS*.

I AM TRIGON'S *DAUGHTER*.

HE IS *PART* OF ME.

DON'T *SAY* THAT, RAVEN. *HE'S* A KILLER WITHOUT MERCY. *YOU* COULDN'T HARM A COMMON *FLY*.

DO NOT BE SO *CERTAIN* OF THAT, WALLACE.

EVERY DAY I MUST *CONTROL* THE FORCES THAT ARE CONTAINED WITHIN ME.

I AM AN *EMPATH* WHO THRIVES ON *EMOTION*. YET WHY DO YOU THINK I AM *NOT* PERMITTED ANY OF MY OWN?

"*BUT I WANDER FROM MY TALE. GALYA, THE WOMAN WHOM I WAS ENTRUSTED TO FOR FEEDING, FOUND ME MISSING...*

COMAN, RAVEN IS *GONE*. I'VE LOOKED *EVERYWHERE*.

THAT FOOL, *JURIS*.

THERE IS ONLY ONE PLACE HE WOULD HAVE *TAKEN* HER--

--*THE GREAT DOOR!*

I AM *SORRY*, LITTLE ONE. THIS IS NOT *YOUR* DOING, BUT YOU STILL MUST *SUFFER*.

EVEN AS *I* WILL FOR BREAKING ALL OF AZARATH'S *LAWS*.

WHICH IS WHY I WILL GO *WITH* YOU AND *CARE* FOR YOU IN THE REALM BEYOND TRIGON'S REACH.

NO, JURIS--PLEASE DO NOT *DO* THIS.

YOU WERE ONE OF OUR *ORIGINALS*. HOW CAN YOU *IGNORE* OUR LAWS?

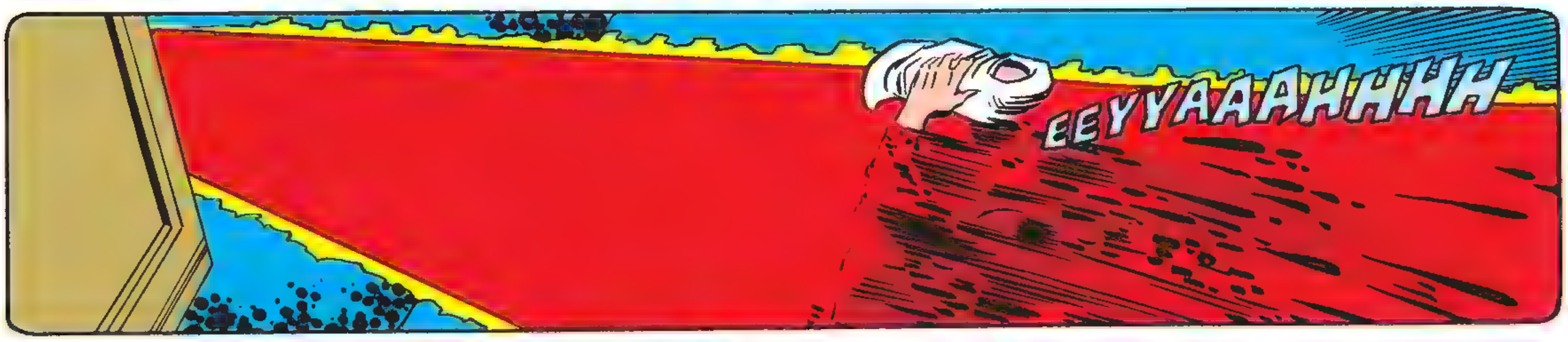
TO *KILL* IS OUR MOST HEINOUS *SIN!*

YOU THINK I DON'T *KNOW* THAT, COMAN? MY HEART IS *TORN* BECAUSE OF WHAT I MUST DO.

BUT, IF AZARATH AND THE WORLDS BEYOND ARE TO *LIVE*, I HAVE NO OTHER *CHOICE!*

10

"MY MOTHER TOLD ME THE DOOR **OPENED** AND A GREAT BLOOD-RED **LIGHT** SHONE THROUGH...

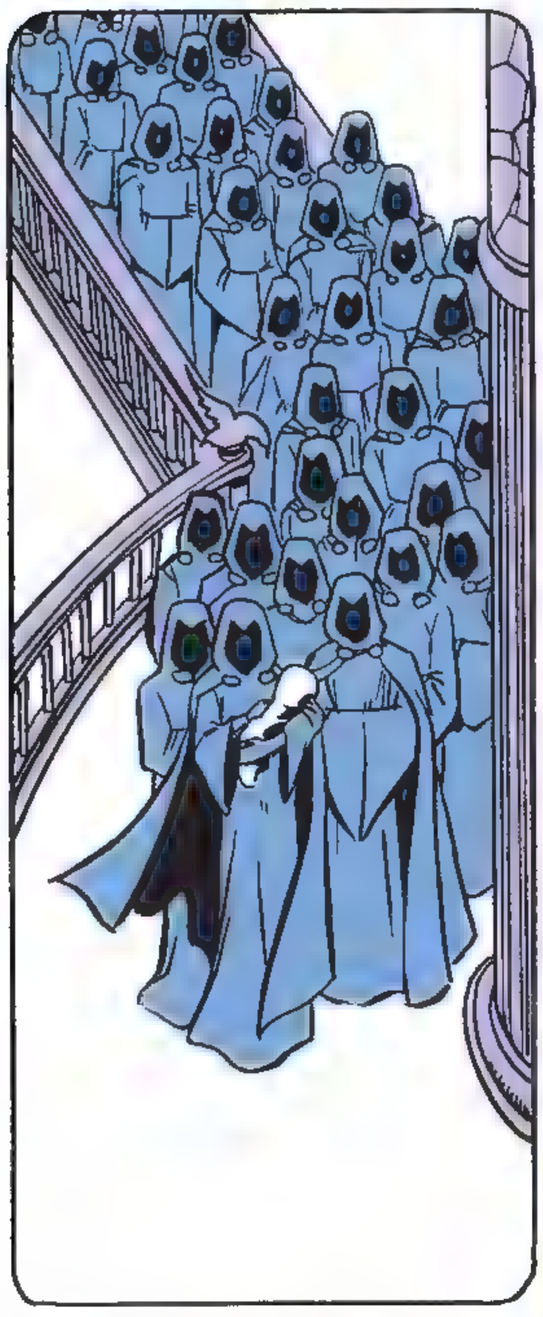






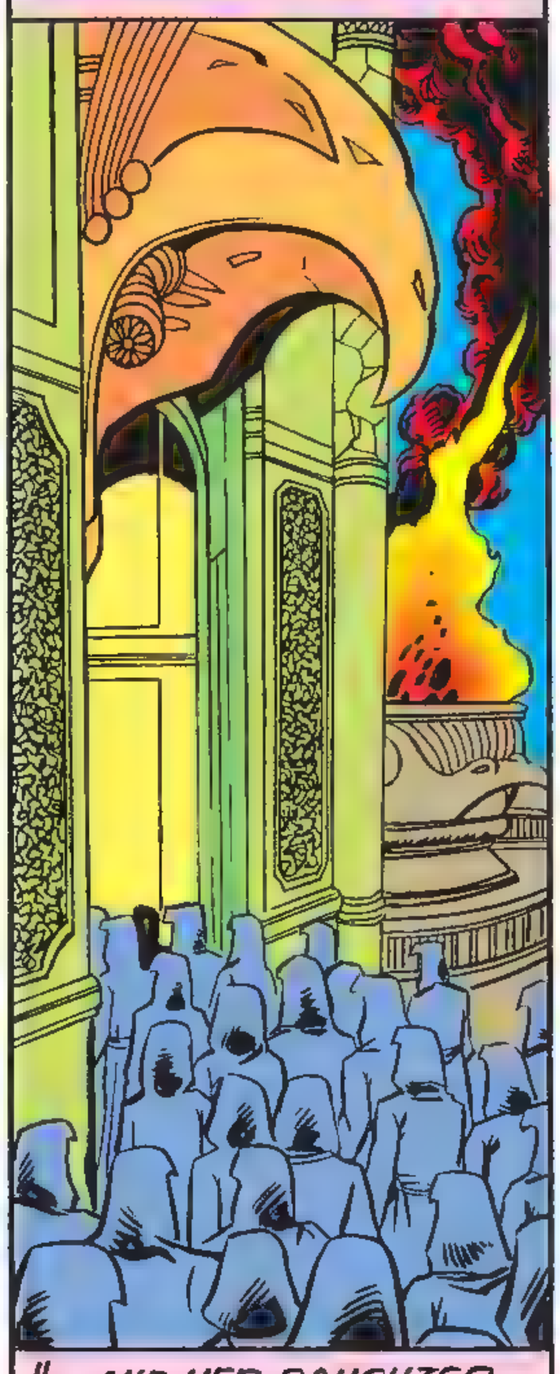


"*YOU MUST KNOW THAT AZAR WAS LIKE A GOD UNTO US.*



"*SHE LED US FROM EARTH TO AZARATH AND SHE TAUGHT AND GUIDED US FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS.*

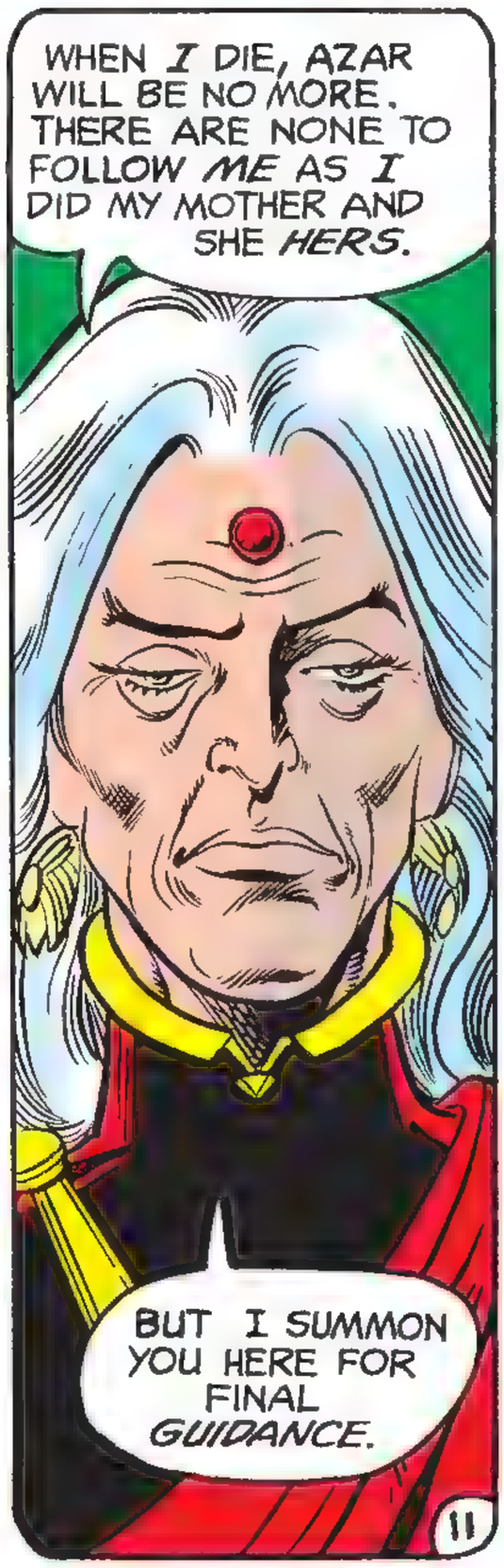
"*WHEN SHE DIED, HER DAUGHTER TOOK HER PLACE FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS MORE...*



"*... AND HER DAUGHTER FOLLOWED HER.*

"*ALREADY ANCIENT WHEN I WAS BORN, AZAR WAS THE ONE WHO CARED FOR ME AS IF I WERE SOMETHING SPECIAL.*"





WE HAVE BROUGHT INTO OUR MIDST THE GIRL NAMED *RAVEN.*

YOU ALL KNOW THE *REASONS* AND HOW THEY HAVE BEEN *DECREED.*

BUT STILL SOME OF YOU *DOUBT.* THUS LOOK TO THE ALL-REVEALING *ORBS...*

SEE THE WORLD OF OUR *BIRTH,* CALM AND SERENE IN BLISSFUL IGNORANCE.

NOW LOOK AND SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE GIRL WERE *CAST AWAY* FROM AZARATH.

I TELL YOU, SHOULD *EARTH* PERISH, THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE WOULD SOON *FOLLOW.*

ONLY THROUGH *OUR PRECEPTS* CAN THE DAUGHTER OF TRIGON *LIVE.*

ARELLA, GIVE TO ME *RAVEN,* FOR FROM THIS MOMENT ON SHE MUST BE *MINE* TO WORK WITH...

...MINE TO *TRAIN.*

MINE TO EXORCISE THE *DEMONS* THAT FOREVERMORE WILL TRY TO *CONTROL* HER.

DEMONS? WERE *YOU* POSSESSED LIKE THAT GIRL, *FRANCES KANE?*

NO, KORIAND'R. NOT *POSSESSED.*

THE DEMON IS MY *SOUL*... THAT PART OF ME WHICH IS *TRIGON.*

THAT PART OF ME I MUST ALWAYS *CONTROL!*

12

"I WAS TAKEN FROM MY MOTHER AND RAISED BY THIS ALMOST-GODDESS.

"SHE TAUGHT ME THE WAYS OF AZARATH, THE MEANINGS OF TRUE PACIFISM...

"...AND THE NEED TO SUBMERGE ALL MY BASIC EMOTIONS.

"SADLY, I SAW LITTLE OF MY MOTHER WHO WAS ASSIGNED TO TEMPLE FUNCTIONS ONLY..

"BUT I WOULD CATCH OCCASIONAL GLIMPSES OF HER BETWEEN MY LEARNING AND HER SOLEMN DUTIES.

"INSTEAD, I PRACTICED MY MEDITATIONS...

"...AND THE SECRETS OF INSTANTANEOUS TRAVEL.

"OH, I YEARNED TO BE AT HER SIDE, BUT THAT WAS NOT TO BE... AT LEAST NOT THEN AND NOT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

"I LEARNED HOW TO FLOW BETWEEN DIMENSIONS AND HOW TO CONTROL THE MYRIAD PATHWAYS TO MY DESTINATION.

13

"BUT MY GREATEST STUDIES CENTERED ON MY EMPATHIC ABILITIES, WHICH ONLY I IN ALL OF AZARATH POSSESSED."

RAVEN, THE BIRD IS DYING.

I KNOW, THERON. I SENSED ITS PAIN BEFORE YOU BROUGHT IT TO ME.

ITS AGONIES FLOW INTO ME...

...AND INTO MY SOUL. AHH, I FEEL IT HEALING.

IS THERE NO ONE I CANNOT CURE?

MY DEAR RAVEN, THERE ARE ONLY A VERY FEW YOU CAN CURE.

THOSE WHOSE PAINS AND AGONIES ARE TOO GREAT ARE BEYOND EVEN YOUR REDEEMING.

DISEASE IS BEYOND MY POWER TO DISPERSE. ONLY THE SIMPLEST OF PAINS CAN I CURE...

BUT THOSE PAINS, THOSE AGONIES, BECOME MY OWN AND THEY CAN ALMOST TEAR MY SOUL ASUNDER.

THE PAINS DON'T STAY WITH YOU, DO THEY?

OH, THEY STAY, KORIAND'R ...IN ALL TOO MANY WAYS THEY REMAIN WITH ME FOREVER.

STILL, YOU KNOW WE'RE ALMOST ALIKE. BOTH OF US WERE TRAINED TO USE OUR SKILLS.

YOU IN AZARATH, ME ON OKAARA.

ALIKE? PERHAPS, BUT YOUR POWERS COULD NOT DESTROY A UNIVERSE IF LEFT UNCONTROLLED.

MINE, DEAR KORIAND'R, CAN DO THAT--AND MORE.

"BUT AGAIN I DIGRESS. YEARS PASSED AS I LEARNED AND MY MOTHER GREW MORE LONELY..."

I FEEL USELESS HERE, COMAN. MY DUTIES ARE MEANINGLESS...

...AND I AM HARDLY PERMITTED TO BE WITH MY DAUGHTER.

I'M HER MOTHER. I SHOULD BE HER TEACHER, NOT AZAR.

WE DO WHAT MUST BE DONE.

14

I KNOW, COMAN, BUT I WANT TO BE HER *MOTHER*.

IT HURTS SO MUCH NOT TO BE *WITH* HER.

WHICH IS WHAT WE CANNOT *AFFORD*, ARELLA.

RAVEN IS NOT *ONE* OF US, NOR CAN SHE EVER TRULY *BE* OF OUR KIND.

SHE MUST NOT KNOW *LOVE* OR *HATE* OR *SORROW*. SHE MUST BE *DRAINED* OF ALL EMOTION.

YOU KNOW THE PENALTY SHOULD AZAR *FAIL*.

COMAN! ARELLA! WE *NEED* YOU!

WHAT *IS* IT, TYNAN?

AZAR IS *DYING*. SHE WANTS ARELLA AT HER SIDE.

ME? WHY *ME*?

AZAR *DYING*? WOULDN'T THAT HAVE *DESTROYED* AZARATH?

NO, WALLACE. AZAR WAS OUR *SPIRITUAL* LEADER BUT THERE WERE *MANY* WHO STUDIED AT HER *SIDE*.

HER LOSS, THOUGH, WAS *DEEPLY FELT*. WE LOVED HER AND ADMIRED HER.

MY MOTHER DID, HOWEVER, WONDER WHAT WOULD *BECOME* OF ME.

ARELLA, I TURN NOW TO *YOU*...

FOR *TRUST* AND FOR *LOVE*... TO DO BEST WHAT *MUST* BE DONE.

15

I'LL DO *ANYTHING* FOR YOU. YOU *KNOW* I WOULD.

RAVEN HAS BEEN *TAUGHT* WHAT SHE NEEDS TO *KNOW*.

HER EMOTIONS CAN BE *CONTROLLED* IF YOU DO NOT *TEMPT* HER.

BUT YOU MUST CONTINUE HER *EDUCATION*, ARELLA. TEACH HER THE *USE* OF ALL HER UNIQUE *POWERS*.

BUT, MORE *IMPORTANT*, ARELLA--HOWEVER *COLD* THE GIRL MAY SEEM, NEVER *SHUN* HER, AND NEVER *FEAR* HER.

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, AZAR? HOW COULD I FEAR MY OWN *DAUGHTER*?

PLEASE, TELL ME WHAT YOU *MEAN*--?

"*BUT*, IT WAS *TOO LATE*.

"*AZAR'S SPIRIT SOUL ROSE FROM HER AND STRETCHED OUTWARD TO THE HEAVENS.*

"*AND NEVER AGAIN WOULD HER LIKE BE KNOWN.*

BEFORE SHE DIED, SHE GAVE ME THESE *RINGS* WHICH SHE HAD WORN, AS DID HER MOTHER AND *HER* MOTHER BEFORE HER.

THROUGH THESE RINGS AZARATH IS WITH ME *ALWAYS*...

AND SOMETIMES I FEEL *AZAR* HERSELF STILL LIVES TO *GUIDE* ME.

16

YOUR MOM TOOK OVER TEACHIN' YOU 'BOUT THE SAME TIME MINE STARTED DOIN' THE SAME THING.

'COURSE, MINE DID BECAUSE I HAD A FALLIN' OUT WITH MY DAD.

WHEREAS MY FATHER TRIGON AND I HAD NEVER EVEN MET.

NO, HE WAS WAITING FOR ME TO BECOME A WOMAN. HE WANTED HIS ONLY LIVING DAUGHTER TO RULE AT HIS SIDE...

BUT, AGAIN, I HURRY MY TALE. AZAR DIED WHEN I WAS BUT TEN YEARS OLD...

STILL LITTLE MORE THAN A CHILD...

...BUT I WAS NOT FILLED WITH THE JOYS OF CHILDHOOD. MY ACTIVITIES WERE NOT THOSE OF PLAY...

SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH HER, COMAN... SHE'S GIVEN UP HER PRAYERS AND TAKES TO MEDITATION...

EACH DAY FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS WHEN OUR STUDIES ARE OVER SHE RUSHES HERE...

SHE IGNORES ALL OTHERS, PREFERS SOLITUDE AND QUIET.

SHE NEVER SPEAKS TO ME UNLESS SHE MUST. COMAN, I TELL YOU, SOMETIMES I...I FEAR HER.

"MY MOTHER COULD NOT KNOW THAT ALL WAS AS AZAR DECREED BUT THEN I COULD NOT ENLIGHTEN HER AND BREAK MY WORD TO AZAR.

"STILL, SOMETIMES THE TRUTH HAS ITS OWN WAYS OF REVEALING ITSELF..."

EEYAAGGHH

RAVEN? FOR AZAR'S SAKE-- RAVEN!!

"SHE RUSHED TO MY SIDE THINKING SHE COULD HELP ME. HOW WRONG SHE WAS... HOW TERRIBLY, TERRIBLY WRONG."

17

"YOU SEE, IT WAS THEN THAT THE NIGHTMARES BEGAN."

YOU ARE MINE, RAVEN-- MINE!

NO, NO! GO AWAY!

NO, DAUGHTER. I HAVE COME TO CLAIM WHAT IS MINE!

AZAR!

GET AWAY FROM HERE, TRIGON! LEAVE MY DAUGHTER ALONE!

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE--OF ALL PEOPLE-- SPARE HER!

"MY MOTHER HAD CALLED UPON THE WRONG SIDE FOR PROTECTION...

"... BUT STILL HE WAS GONE, THOUGH HIS CHILL LINGERED ON."

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, RAVEN? PLEASE ANSWER ME!

SO EVIL...SO VERY EVIL...

...HE SAID I WAS HIS DAUGHTER.

WHO IS HE, MOTHER? WHO IS HE?

"BUT MY MOTHER SAID NOTHING, THEN..."

AZARATH SHOOK, ARELLA... AND WE HEARD HIS VOICE.

IT WAS TRIGON, WASN'T IT? TELL THE TRUTH!

IT WAS TRIGON.

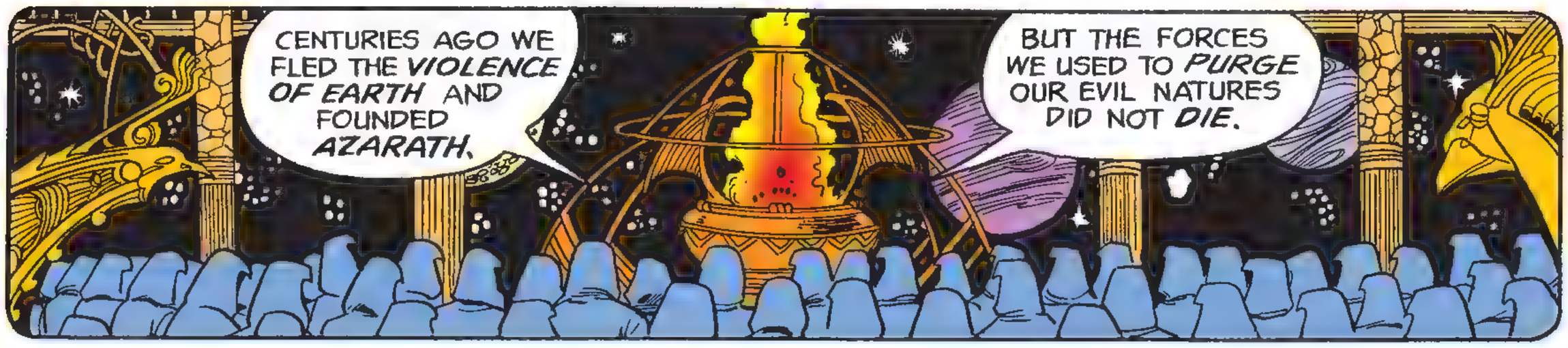
THEN, EVEN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...WE ARE STILL NOT SAFE.

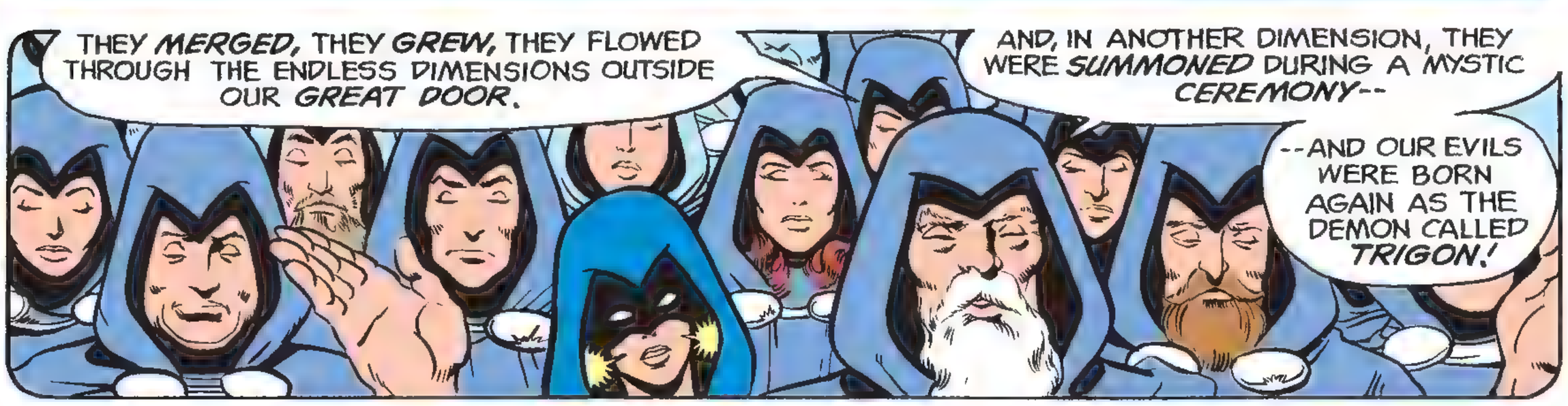
IT'S THE GIRL! SHE BROUGHT THE DEMON TO US.

YES, BUT WE ARE THE ONES WHO CREATED HIM!

18

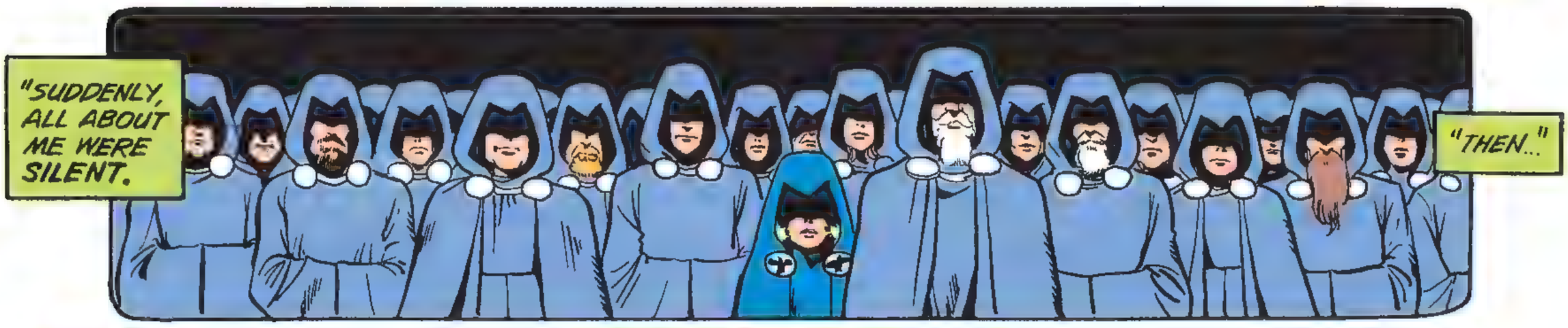
"I WAS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE AGAINST MY WILL, AND THOUGH I WAS NOT INTERESTED, I STILL LISTENED AS COMAN SPOKE."

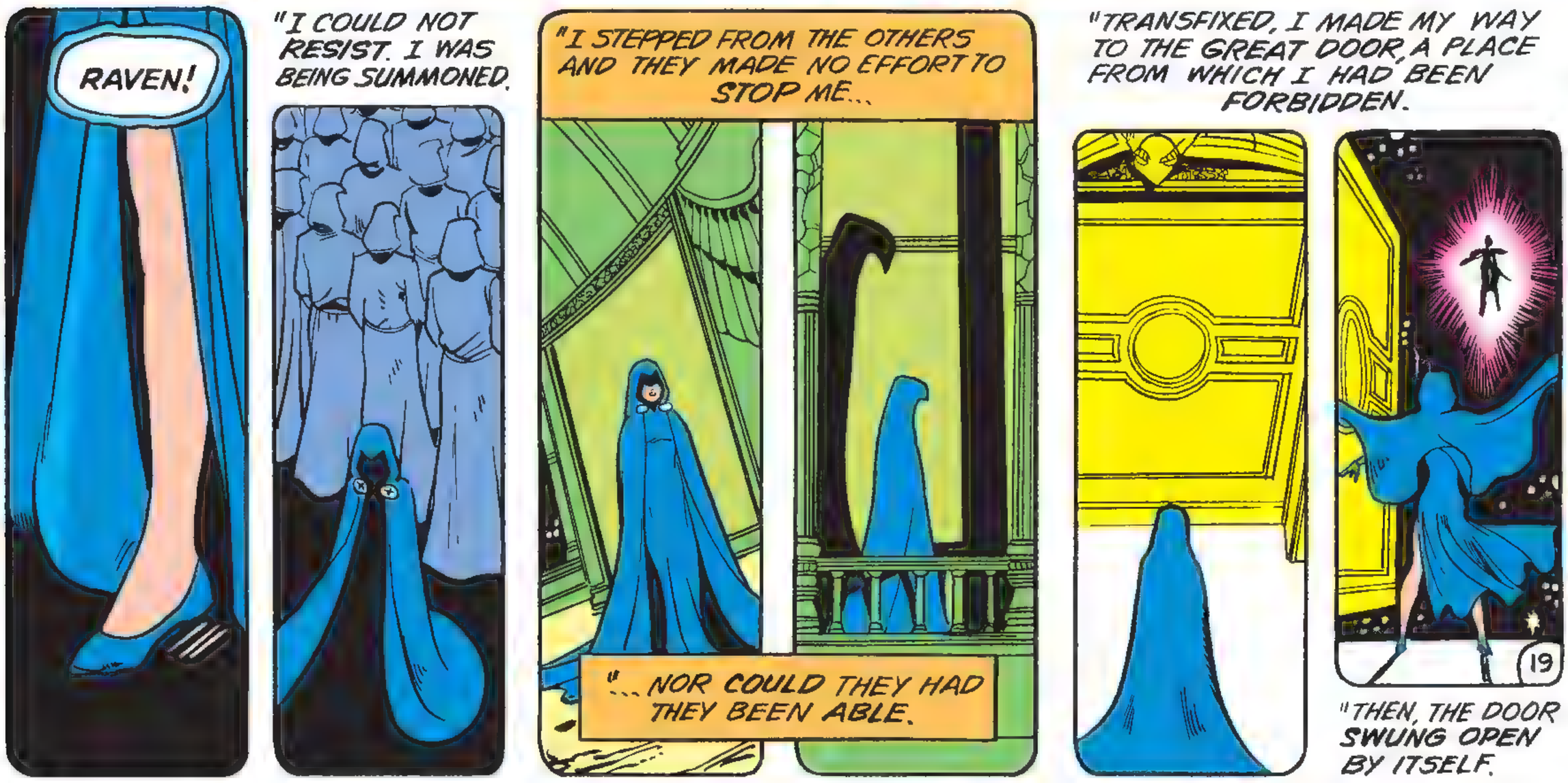




"AT THE VERY MENTION OF HIS NAME, THE ETERNAL FLAME FLARED BRIGHT...







"AND I SAW WHAT WAITED FOR ME BEYOND!"

GREETINGS, RAVEN.

YOUR FATHER IS PLEASED TO SEE YOU.

"ALL MY LIFE I HAD BEEN TAUGHT TO SUPPRESS MY EMOTIONS. BUT NOW, IN THE FACE OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF, I ADMIT TO SHOWING FEAR."

20

YOU ARE MY *CHILD.* THE ONLY ONE TO HAVE EVER *SURVIVED.*

I HAVE WAITED *LONG* TO BRING YOU TO ME.

TO TAKE YOU *HOME.* TO HAVE YOU RULE *BESIDE* ME.

HOME? I AM TO GO WITH *YOU?*

"I HAD **WONDERED** WHY I WAS BRED AS AN **EMPATH.** NOW I KNEW THE **ANSWER.**"

GO WITH *YOU...* GO WITH MY *FATHER?* I...I--

N-NO... I SENSE EVIL... TERRIBLE *EVIL* IN YOU.

I SENSE *DEATH...* CRUEL, HEARTLESS *MURDER.*

NO! YOU MIGHT BE MY *FATHER* BUT I COULD NEVER STAND *BESIDE* YOU.

I HAVE BEEN BORN TO *PEACE.* YOU WALLOW IN *DESTRUCTION.*

CHILD, YOU HAVE BEEN *LIED* TO ALL THESE MANY YEARS.

I ORDAINED THAT AZARATH ADOPT YOU FOR I KNEW THERE YOU WOULD BE *SAFE* UNTIL I *NEEDED* YOU.

UNGHH!

I KNEW THEY WOULD NOURISH YOUR *POWERS* IN A WAY I COULD EASILY *SUBVERT.*

I *WANT* YOU, DAUGHTER!

BUT SHE'S NOT *YOURS* ANY MORE, TRIGON.!

21

AH, *THERE* YOU ARE, MY WIFE. TRULY, I HAD EXPECTED YOU *SOONER.*

PLEASE, TRIGON, YOU HAD *ME*... YOU MUSTN'T TAKE *HER.*

THE WHIMPERING CUR DEFENDS HER *PUP?*

COME NOW, ARELLA. I KNOW YOU ARE WEAK AND STUPID.

--BUT SURELY YOU ARE *AWARE* THAT YOU CANNOT HOPE TO *SURVIVE* IN BATTLE AGAINST TRIGON?

YOU HAVE SEEN MY POWER *FIRST-HAND,* WIFE.

YOU'VE *CRIED* AS WORLDS DIED BEFORE MY *DEATH-STARE.*

SURELY YOU KNOW THAT WITH BUT A *THOUGHT,* I COULD *SLAY* YOU.

NO! NO!

Y-YOU'VE *KILLED* HER!

22

KILLED HER? *HARDLY*, DAUGHTER.

I STILL HAVE SEVERAL YEARS' *NEED* OF HER.

BESIDES, WHY *SLAY* SUCH A USELESS RAG--

--WHEN THERE IS MUCH MORE PLEASURE IN *HUMILIATING* HER.

TORTURE IS A FAR *BETTER* MEDICINE FOR THAT EXCUSE OF A WOMAN!

"HE LAUGHED AS MY MOTHER CRIED...

"...AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I WANTED ONLY TO KILL.

"AND THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME MY SOUL-SELF FULLY FORMED!"

AT LAST! AT VERY *LAST!*

YOU *DO* HAVE THE POWER I SENSED IN YOU!

YOU TRULY *ARE* MY CHILD!

DAUGHTER, THAT SOUL-SELF IS YOUR *DARKER* SIDE... THE PART OF YOU THAT IS *ME!*

I *BAPTIZE* IT NOW, RAVEN-- INSTILL IT WITH ALL *MY ESSENCE.*

THANK ALL THE DARK GODS, *YOU ARE MINE!!!*

... YOU ARE THE *DAUGHTER OF TRIGON!*

NO! NO!

YOU CANNOT FOREVER *CONTAIN* WHAT YOU ARE.

THINK, DAUGHTER--REMEMBER AZARATH AS IT *TRULY* IS.

THEY HAVE ALWAYS *HATED* YOU, GIRL.

THEY *FEAR* YOU, AS WELL THEY SHOULD.

AND, ALL ALONG YOU'VE *HATED* THEM FOR THAT, HAVEN'T YOU?

ADMIT IT, DAUGHTER. *ADMIT IT!*

N-NO... *FIGHT* HIM, RAVEN... FOR AZAR'S SAKE, *FIGHT* HIM...

THEY WANTED YOU DEAD, RAVEN. BUT *I* WOULD NOT *PERMIT* THAT!

I WAS THE ONE WHO STOPPED JURIS! *I* WAS THE ONE WHO *SAVED* YOU!

BUT *YOU* NOW HAVE THE POWER, DAUGHTER.

YOU CAN MAKE THEM *PAY* FOR THEIR HATREDS AND FEARS.

MAKE THEM PAY! ARE YOU NOT TRIGON'S DAUGHTER?

I...I *AM!*

NO... RAVEN... *DON'T.*

I...IT IS *TOO LATE.*

SHE HAS TAKEN ON THE MANTLE OF HER *HERITAGE.*

THAT IS ALL I WISHED TO *KNOW.*

I HAVE NO FURTHER *NEED* FOR HER NOW.

24

"THAT WAS ALL HE SAID. HE NO LONGER NEEDED ME.

"THERE WAS A TERRIBLE, BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT...

"...AND MY MOTHER AND I FOUND OURSELVES BACK IN AZARATH."

WHAT HAPPENED?

I NEEDED TO KNOW IF YOU HAD THE POWER. I NEEDED TO KNOW IF YOU WERE TRULY MY DAUGHTER.

I NEEDED TO KNOW IF YOU COULD BE CORRUPTED. YOU CAN, RAVEN... YOU ARE MINE.

YOUR POWER WILL GROW, RAVEN. AND, WHEN YOU ARE A WOMAN, I WILL RETURN.

WE ARE SO MUCH ALIKE, DAUGHTER... SO VERY MUCH ALIKE.

MOTHER, WE CAN'T BE THE SAME... WE CAN'T BE.

"BUT MY MOTHER SAID NOTHING. SHE SIMPLY HELD ME TIGHT AND CRIED."

MY MOTHER GAINED STRENGTH THROUGH THAT ENCOUNTER. AND I...

...AT LAST I UNDERSTOOD WHY AZAR WANTED ME TO CONTROL MY EVERY EMOTION.

WHEN I TURNED EIGHTEEN I SENSED TRIGON'S RETURN. AND THAT WAS WHEN I LEFT AZARATH AND SEARCHED FOR YOU.

GOOD GRIEF, RAVEN, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US THAT BEFORE?

ALL THAT TIME I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST SNUBBING ME.

IN TRYING TO MAKE YOU LOVE ME, I COULD HAVE... MY GOD, WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE?

WHAT ARE YOU GRINNIN' ABOUT, SALAD-HEAD?

JUST SUDDENLY BEIN' GLAD THAT MY LIFE WASN'T THAT SCREWY!

WASN'T IT, CHANGELING?

BE HERE NEXT ISSUE FOR:

THE DOOM PATROL!

THE OLD TEEN TITANS!

MENTO!

GALTRY!

THE ARSENAL!

AND A WHOLE LOT MORE!

MINI-SERIES 3 OF 4

TALES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS™

STARRING THE

CHANGELING

60¢ U.K.20p

NO. 3 AUG.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

TM

HERE THEY ARE! THE SENSATIONAL SECRETS OF GARFIELD LOGAN!

MARV WOLFMAN writer . GEORGE PEREZ penciller . GENE DAY embellisher . JOHN COSTANZA letterer . ADRIENNE ROY colorist . LEN WEIN editor

THE CHANGELING

THEIR THIRD DAY HERE IN THE GRAND CANYON HAS COME TO AN EXHAUSTING CONCLUSION. HOURS OF RIDING RAGING RAPIDS AND CLIMBING TO HIGH CLIFF-DWELLINGS HAVE TAKEN THEIR TOLL...

...AT LEAST ON MOST.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS, SUPER-HEROES OF ALL AGES--

J-8230

TONIGHT, NO MORE OF WALLY'S TONGUE-SCORCHING, STOMACH-CHURNING, TEXAS-STYLE *CHILI*--

--TONIGHT WE DINE LIKE *KINGS*! 'OH, WHAT *FOODS* THESE MORSELS BE'!

TONIGHT, MOUTH-WATERING, SUCCULENT *FRANKFURTERS* FROM GOOD OL' RELIABLE *NATHAN'S* OF CONEY ISLAND.

SO ROUND, SO FIRM, SO FULLY-PACKED...

...NOT UNLIKE OUR OWN *PRINCESS KORIAND'R* OF TAMARAN.

HEROES AREN'T HARD TO FIND

I THOUGHT *SUPER-HEROING* WAS TOUGH, BUT CLIMBING CLIFFS ALL DAY MADE ME USE MUSCLES I FORGOT I *HAD.*

CONEY ISLAND, HUH? MAN, I REMEMBER GOIN' DOWN THERE EVERY SUMMER...WALKIN' THE *BOARDWALK...*

...RIDIN' THE *CYCLONE!* IT SCARED ME HALF OUTTA MY WITS.

WE OUGHTTA DO THAT *AGAIN* SOMEDAY!

YOU'RE NOT SORRY YOU *OPENED UP* TO US, ARE YOU, RAVEN?

I THINK *UNDER-STANDING* YOU BETTER MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

IT IS *HARD* TO TALK ABOUT MYSELF, WALLACE. BUT NO, I AM NOT SORRY.

I KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE *HOT-DOGS* ON TAMARAN, BUT YOU'LL *LOVE* 'EM.

BUT ISN'T EATING DOGS *GRUESOME*, GARFIELD?

AW, THEY'RE NOT *REAL* DOGS... WE JUST *CALL* 'EM THAT.

HEROES ARE A HARD TO FIND

OH, I KNOW. I WAS JUST *JOKING.*

I'M REALLY GLAD WE *TOOK* THIS VACATION. IT'S GIVEN US A CHANCE TO *KNOW* EACH OTHER BETTER.

I FEEL *CLOSER* TO ALL OF YOU.

YOU HADDA GO *SPOIL* THINGS, DONNA? LOGAN HERE'S CHOMPIN' AT THE BIT TO TELL US ABOUT *HIS* BAD OL' DAYS.

JUST KEEP IT *SHORT*, GREENIE. AN' DON'T BORE US *TOO* MUCH.

VPVPVP VPVPVP

SURE WOULDN'T WANNA DO *THAT*, VICTOR--

--NOT AFTER HAVING TO *FORCE* OUR-SELVES AWAKE DURING *YOUR* TALE OF WOE.

FACE IT, GUYS, HOW COULD *MY* STORY BE ANYTHING BUT A *GEORGE LUCAS* KIND'A SAGA?

IT'S GOT *EVERYTHING!* ACTION! GIRLS! TRAGEDY! GIRLS! LAUGHTER! GIRLS! AND LEST WE *FORGET*--

--GIRLS!

UPPER LAMUMB RESEARCH CEN

IT ALL BEGAN BACK IN *UPPER LAMUMBA*--DEEPEST, DARKEST, KING KONGEST *AFRICA.*

"MY DAD, MARK LOGAN, WAS A SCIENTIST WITH MORE DEGREES THAN A FAHRENHEIT THERMOMETER..."

MARIE! GET THIS BRAT *OUT* OF HERE! HE'S JUST RUINED A *WEEK'S WORK.*

"LIFE WAS GREAT BACK THEN, EXCEPT THAT I SORTA GOT A LITTLE SICK!"

GARFIELD'S COME DOWN WITH SAKUTIA--A DEADLY DISEASE THAT ONLY ANIMALS CAN SURVIVE.

BUT MY WORK HERE HAS ISOLATED THE COMMON GENETIC CODE BETWEEN HUMANS AND ANIMALS.

MARK, THAT COULD KILL HIM IF YOU'RE WRONG.

SO WILL SAKUTIA. MARIE, WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE.

"WELL, ONE THING YOU CAN SAY ABOUT MY DAD.

"WHEN HE GOOFS...

"...HE GOOFS BIG!

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR "WONDER YEARS" BEING CONFUSED WITH 'SPROUT,' THE JOLLY GREEN GIANT'S NEPHEW?

"YEAH, HIS MAD-SCIENTIST'S THINGIE SAVED MY LIFE, BUT NOT QUITE THE WAY HE THOUGHT IT WOULD.

WELL, AT LEAST NOBODY THOUGHT I WAS THAT DAVID BANNER GUY FROM TV.

SO THERE I WAS, A HUMAN KERMIT THE FROG... ALL READY TO GROW UP TO BECOME POSTER BOY FOR "THE LAWN DOCTOR"!

EXCEPT MY MOM WANDERED BY THIS BLACK MAMBA, A SNAKE SO MEAN ONLY DARTH VADER COULD LOVE 'IM.

SOMETHING CAME OVER ME AND I BEGAN TO CHANGE...INTO A MONGOOSE. WELL, EXIT ONE SNAKE.

"YEARS PASSED. THEN MY PARENTS... THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT...

"LORD, IT STILL BOTHERS ME EVEN NOW. I HAD ALL THESE POWERS, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO SAVE THEM."

IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT, GAR. YOU WERE A KID.

YEAH, I KNOW, BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE THE HURT GO AWAY.

I CRIED FOR A MONTH IT HURT SO MUCH.

3

"BEFORE HE DIED, MY DAD BECAME FRIENDS WITH KING TAWABA, CHIEF OF THE LOCAL TRIBE. TAWABA TOOK ME IN AND MADE ME PART OF HIS FAMILY.

"BETTER TELL YOU, THAT REALLY TICKED OFF MOBU, THE TRIBE'S WITCH-DOCTOR. Y'SEE, MOBU HATED MY DAD...

"...AND HE WASN'T VERY FOND OF ME, EITHER, AS I SOON LEARNED..."

YOU COME TO STEAL SACRED JEWELS. BUT I WILL LEAD YOU TO THEM...

...IF YOU KILL ONE SMALL BOY FOR ME.

"LIKE I SAID. J.R. EWING HAD NOTHING ON MOBU.

WELL, I FOLLOWED HUEY, DEWEY AND SCREWY AN' TRIED TO STOP 'EM..."

A GREEN LEOPARD? KILL HIM!

JUST 'BOUT THEN THE TEMPLE START-ED TO COLLAPSE. MOBU DIED THERE BUT THOSE CREEPS RESCUED ME...

...FIGURED THEY COULD USE MY POWERS TO HAVE ME STEAL THINGS FOR THEM.

SO THAT'S HOW I BECAME GARFIELD LOGAN, THE F.B.I.'S MOST WANTED EIGHT-YEAR-OLD.

"WELL, THOSE TWO JERKS FINALLY KILLED EACH OTHER, BUT THAT'S WHEN GALTRY FOUND ME.

"YOU REMEMBER WHAT I SAID ABOUT THAT BLACK MAMBA AND MOBU? THEY WERE PIKERS COMPARED WITH GRUESOME.

"HE WAS APPOINTED MY LEGAL GUARDIAN, BUT ALL HE GUARDED WAS MY DAD'S MONEY.

"I WAS HIT BAD AND TURNED BACK INTO THE HANDSOME JOCK YOU SEE BEFORE YOU NOW.

"OF COURSE, THERE WAS A BRIGHT SPOT IN MY LIFE, TOO. BACK IN THE U.S.A. I MET MY FIRST--☆GIRL☆ (YAY!). HER NAME WAS JILLIAN."

HEY, JILLIAN! YOU ALWAYS DATE WALKING SALADS?

WHY DON'T YOU GO OUT WITH A REAL BOY, JILLIAN?

"YEAH, NOW I HAD GIRLS, AND THOUSANDS OF FRIENDS, TOO.

4

"GIRLS, FRIENDS, AN' BETTER THAN ALL OF THAT-- THE DOOM PATROL. LORD, I MISS THE CHIEF, AND NEGATIVE MAN. CLIFF STEELE'S STILL LANKING AROUND AS ROBOTMAN, BUT I GUESS I REALLY MOST MISS RITA FARR, ELASTI-GIRL. WHEN SHE MARRIED STEVE DAYTON THEY ADOPTED ME... NOW I ONLY HAVE DAYTON, BUT AT LEAST WE'RE FINALLY HITTING IT OFF WELL.

"AFTER THE PATROL WAS KILLED, I SORTA DRIFTED ALONG, BECAME A MEMBER OF TEEN TITANS WEST. YOU REMEMBER 'EM, DICK.

"THERE WAS GOLDEN EAGLE, THE BUMBLEBEE, YOU, DONNA AND WALLY.

"SPEEDY WAS WITH US THEN. SO WERE LILITH, GNARRK, MAL, AQUALAD AND THE OTHERS... THOSE WERE GOOD TIMES..."

5

6

UHH, GARFIELD -- WERE YOU PLANNING ON EATING YOUR *STICK*?

OOPS! GUESS I WAS *TALKING* TOO MUCH, HUH?

HEROES AREN'T HARD TO FIND

BUT DON'T WORRY. I'M AN *EXPERT* ON HOT-DOG COOKING!

WAS *LIZZIE BORDEN* YOUR TEACHER?

MAYBE YOU'D BETTER EAT AND *FORGET* THE STORIES TONIGHT.

LOGAN NOT *BRAG*? FORGET IT, DONNA. YOU'D HAVE A *JEWISH POPE* BEFORE THAT HAPPENS.

LAUGH IF YOU *WILL*, MY SKEPTICAL COHORTS, BUT HOW MANY OF *YOU* WERE MAJOR TV STARS? C'MON. LINE UP *ALPHABETICALLY*.

OH, THAT'S *RIGHT*. YOU WERE ON "*SPACE TREK: 2022*."

YOU WERE ON *TELEVISION*?

BELIEVE IT, RAVEN. HIT NUMBER-ONE SHOW. BIG BUCKS! STARLETS BEGGING TO *DATE* ME. YEAH, I HAD IT *ALL*!

...*PLEASE*, TIFFANY?

WELL, Y'KNOW, LIKE I GOT THIS HERE AGREEMENT WITH *ROCKY*, OUR PRODUCER. WE'RE LIKE RILLY COMMITTED TO SHARING OUR SPACE.

YEAH. SHE SHARES THAT SPACE WITH *90% OF HOLLYWOOD*.

SURE, TIFFANY. I UNDERSTAND. NO *HARD FEELINGS*.

THAT'S *GOOD*, TAR.

NO VISITORS ON SET

THAT'S *GAR*!

EVERYONE -- ON THE *SET*.

TIM HERE, CAPTAIN OF "THE CORPORATION", HAS WANDERED INTO THE *DEMILITARIZED ZONE* AND WAS CAPTURED BY THE KLAMULONS.

J.S., AM *I* A KLAMULON?

YEAH, LEONARD. NOW *SHUT UP*!

EVERYONE IN PLACE. THIS IS A TAKE!

ACT SEVEN: SCENE FOUR TAKE 2

7

CAPTAIN, MY HEART, IT CANNA TAKE THE *STRAIN!*

CALM DOWN, TORK. LISTEN, KLAMULON, YOU WON'T HOLD US FOR LONG. WE'VE GOT A SPECIAL *RESCUE ENSIGN* ON HIS WAY TO SAVE US.

I BEG TO *DIFFER*, CAPTAIN. THE ENSIGN WON'T *MAKE IT.*

WHAT? WHY *NOT*, TORK?

HE'S *DEAD*, TIM.

OH, WELL. EASY COME, EASY GO.

I GUESS IT'S UP TO *YOU*, TORK, TO STOP THAT KLAMULON *SNAKE-IN-THE-GRASS.*

GET IT? *HUH?*

YES, I *DO*, CAPTAIN. AS THE SHIP'S *METAMORPH*, I'LL PUT THE *SQUEEZE* ON THIS KLAMULON CREEP!

UGH! STOP! I *GIVE!*

STOP! STOP THE ACTION!

LOGAN, YOU THIRD-RATE FOUL-UP. YOU MISSED YOUR *MARK.*

YOU WERE *OFF CAMERA* AND WHAT'S WORSE, YOU SQUEEZED LEONARD SO HIS *REAL FACE* SHOWED THROUGH THAT FLIMSY *MASK.*

"THE TV SCENE WAS GREAT, GUYS. I WAS A BIG STAR AND WAS TREATED LIKE ONE...

"...BUT ONE DAY OUR SHOOTING WAS INTER-RUPTED..."

LOGAN, I'VE COME FOR *YOU.*

AND I'VE COME TO *KILL* YOU.

KRAK

"SUDDENLY THIS ARMORED PEA-BRAIN SHOWS UP, SMASHING HIS WAY ONTO THE SOUND-STAGE, INTENDING TO TURN ME INTO DAISY FERTILIZER...

8

"NATCH, I WAS READY, HERO THAT I ALWAYS AM. I FOUGHT BACK WITH A FEROCITY YOU GUYS HAVE NEVER SEEN..."

DON'T RUN, YOU FOOL--I'LL FIND YOU WHEREVER YOU HIDE!

FOR NOW AND FOREVER--THE ARSENAL RULES SUPREME!

SKRAK!

"THE ARSENAL! SUDDENLY I REMEMBERED HEARING ABOUT HIM. HE WAS ONE OF THE GOOFBALLS THE DOOM PATROL ONCE FOUGHT.

MY BIO-SUIT HAS BEEN TOTALLY REBUILT, LOGAN.

SPING!

NOTHING CAN ESCAPE ME!

WANNA BET, UGLY? YOU MAY BE HOLDING ONE END'A THIS CABLE, CRETIN--

--BUT GOOD OL' JUMBO HERE'S GOT THE OTHER!

KRASH!

"ER, GARFIELD, YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN!"

HMMM. OBVIOUSLY THE FIRE'S TOO HOT FOR ONE HOT DOG.

HEROES AREN'T HARD TO FIND

WHY DON'TCHA ORDER IN SOME "CHICKEN DELIGHT"?

NOPE! WE DO THINGS MY WAY.

WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO COOK THAT FOR YOU, GAR?

I'M AN EXPERT, M'LOVE. I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.

HEROES AREN'T HARD TO

THIS'LL WORK.

9

NOW THEN, WHERE *WAS* I? OH, YES. WE KEPT DUKING IT OUT.

THE ARSENAL WAS *GOOD*, BUT OF COURSE, I WAS A *PRO*.

WHAT WAS HE *AFTER*, GAR?

HEROES ARENT HARD TO FIND NC

THAT'S THE *FUNNY* THING, WALLY...

WHEN HE *FIRST* ATTACKED THE DOOM PATROL THERE WASN'T ANY *REASON* FOR HIS ACTIONS.

IN FACT, HE TURNED OUT TO BE A *MIDGET*, SOMEONE THE PATROL NEVER EVEN *MET*.

ALL THEY KNEW WAS THEY KEPT GETTING MYSTERIOUS TIPS WHICH WOULD LEAD 'EM TO HIS ARMORSHIP. BUT EVEN *THEN* THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND *WHY* HE WANTED THEM DEAD.

"OF COURSE, I FOUND OUT..."

THIS BATTLEGROUND IS TOO *CONFIN-ING*, LOGAN.

I WANT ROOM TO *DESTROY* YOU!

AND I WANT YOU TO *SUFFER*.

WE'LL MEET *AGAIN*, LOGAN--

--BELIEVE ME, WE WILL DEFINITELY MEET *AGAIN*!

LOGAN, THAT WAS *GREAT*! BUT CAN WE GET ANOTHER *TAKE*?

SCRIPT #2073
GARFIELD
LOGAN

"I WANTED TO KILL THE DIRECTOR!"

"I DIDN'T HAVETA BECAUSE OUR SHOW WAS SUED, THEY SAID, FOR RIPPING OFF "STAR TREK" AND "SPACE: 1999".

"I TELL YA, SOME PEOPLE WILL SUE OVER ANY STUPID THING.

"BUT I HAD NO PROBLEM. OFFERS PILED IN."

H. SHELTON DRUM
CASTING DIRECTOR

NO!

NO!

GIBSON agency
CYNTHIA GIBSON
ENOLA GIBSON

...AND STILL NO!

"BUT I HAD ALREADY DECIDED ACTING WASN'T MY BAG...

"SO I RETURNED HOME TO MY SPRAWLING MANSION IN WEST HOLLYWOOD. WE TV PEOPLE LIVE BIG, Y'KNOW.

"THINGS WERE JUST GREAT. I HAD FUN, AN' I HAD GIRLS CRAWLING OUTTA THE WOODWORK TO DATE ME."

ZELDA ZORETZ? HI, THIS IS GAR...

GAR LOGAN.

FROM TV.

WITH GREEN SKIN.

ZELDA?

ZELDA?

"IT WAS PARTIES EVERY NIGHT. ONE DAY IT WAS "THE STUDIO", THE NEXT, CHER'S HOUSE. AFTER THAT, HEF'S MANSION.

MABLE YOUNG 555-2424
CONNIE YANCHO 784-8501
BRENDA TOTZ 966-7048
PATSY ZINGER 555-2021
ZELDA ZORET 672-1210

"I WAS HARDLY EVER HOME. BUT ONE NIGHT I TOOK A BREATHER FROM LIVING LIFE IN THE FAST LANE--

"--WHEN THERE CAME A KNOCKING AT MY LIVING ROOM DOOR."

HI, GAR.

JILLIAN? OH, WOW! I DON'T BELIEVE IT. WOW!

CAN I COME IN, GAR?

OH YEAH-- OF COURSE. SURE.

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN L.A. MAN, IT'S GREAT SEEING YOU.

YOU'RE LOOKING WONDERFUL, GAR.

I AM? OH, OF COURSE. SO ARE YOU, JILLIAN.

GOSH. SO ARE YOU.

"I WAS READY TO SETTLE DOWN WITH ONE GIRL. Y'KNOW, THE NOVELTY AND SUCH. AND JILLIAN WAS SUCH A NICE GIRL.

"WE PICKED UP WHERE WE HAD LEFT OFF. IT WAS GREAT.

"OH, I KNEW HER FATHER HATED ME. SEEMS HE WANTS GRANDCHILDREN, NOT SALADS, TO COMFORT HIM IN HIS OLD AGE.

ICE CREAM SODAS

"BUT WE DIDN'T WORRY 'BOUT HIM MUCH. WE JUST HAD FUN. I LOVED HAVING JILLIAN AROUND...

"...BUT I DIDN'T LOVE WHAT WAS GONNA HAPPEN SO VERY SOON."

I REALLY HAVE TO GO NOW, GAR. I HAVE SCHOOL TOMORROW.

WE'LL KEEP SEEING EACH OTHER, WON'T WE?

OH, I CERTAINLY THINK SO.

JILLIAN, NEXT WEEK THIS NEW MOVIE'S OPENING. "STAR WARS," I THINK IT'S CALLED. YOU WANNA GO?

I HEAR IT MAY BE OKAY.

OKAY.

"UNFORTUNATELY, THERE WASN'T GOING TO BE A MOVIE FOR US NEXT WEEK..."

NOW!

GAR? GAR?!?

JILLIAN? OH, MY GOD!

HE'S GOT HER!

BUT HE WON'T TAKE HER FAR.

"GOTTA TELL YOU--IN MY CONDOR SHAPE, I FLEW FASTER'N I EVER FLEW BEFORE.

"I REALLY HATED THE ARSENAL. ME, MAYBE THE SWEETEST GUY WHO EVER SET FOOT ON THIS EARTH.

"I FOLLOWED THE FILTH NORTH TO THIS FANTASTIC CASTLE BUILT BY SOME CRAZY MOVIE STAR BACK IN THE THIRTIES.

"YOU MIGHT HAVE SEEN IT. THESE DAYS THEY USE IT ALL THE TIME IN THE MOVIES.

"WELL, GRUESOME TOOK JILLIAN INSIDE...

..."BUT ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WAS GOING TO KEEP ME FROM RESCUING HER.

LEMME IN! OPEN THIS DOOR, JERKO!

"GUESS I SCARED HIM, 'CAUSE HE DID WHAT I DEMANDED."

WHMP!

14

"I REMEMBERED SOMETHING THE DOOM PATROL TOLD ME 'BOUT METAL-MIND--THE LAST FORTRESS HE HAD WAS JURY-RIGGED WITH DOZENS OF DEADLY TRAPS.

"NATCH, I WAS WARY. I CHECKED MY EVERY STEP...

"WELL, MY EVERY OTHER STEP, AS IT TURNED OUT.

"HE BLASTED ME WITH THIS SUN-GUN GIZMO, INTENDING TO ROAST ME LIKE CHRISTMAS CHESTNUTS."

THE SAME WAY YOU'RE ROASTING THOSE HOT-DOGS?

SURE YOU DON'T WANT SOME LEFTOVER CHILI?

PLEASE SAY YES, GAR--FOR THE SAKE OF ALL THOSE INNOCENT HOT DOGS YET TO BE BORN.

YOU LAUGH, HUMPH? WELL, HE WHO LAUGHS LAST. I'LL SHOW YOU WHO'S THE JULIA CHILD OF THE TITANS SET.

"I WAS KINDA STUNNED, AND I DIDN'T NEED TO GUESS WHO'D ZAPPED ME..."

NOW, WHERE WAS I? OH, RIGHT...

AT LAST, LOGAN-- I HAVE YOU.

JUST AS I HAVE YOUR LITTLE *GIRL FRIEND.*

JILLIAN?

HE HASN'T *HURT* ME, GAR. PLEASE DON'T *LET* HIM.

I'LL *KILL* YOU FOR THIS.

"DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU I WAS *TICKED OFF*? SO I MADE THIS LIGHTNING-FAST *METAMORPHOSIS*...

THUNK!

"ONLY I KINDA FOUND THIS *OBSTACLE* IN MY WAY!"

YOU DIDN'T TRULY THINK I'D ALLOW YOU *NEAR* ME, DID YOU, LOGAN?

OR DO YOU ONLY *ANSWER* TO *BEAST BOY* THESE DAYS?

"SUDDENLY, THE BOTTOM OF ARSENAL'S *MASK* STARTED TO SLIDE UP.

"IT WAS *OPENING.*"

YOU? I SHOULD'A *KNOWN* IT WAS YOU.

NOBODY ELSE COULD BE SO *SLIMY.*

"*GALTRY!*

"MY EX-GUARDIAN DEVIL HIMSELF!"

EVER SINCE I LOST *CUSTODY* OVER YOU AND YOUR FATHER'S *MILLIONS*, I'VE AWAITED THIS DAY.

IF YOU WANT HER *ALIVE*, GIVE ME THE *MONEY* YOU COST ME.

THAT'S WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO, BEAST BOY--YOUR *MONEY*...

...OR HER *LIFE!*

16

YOU *DON'T* UNDERSTAND, DO YOU? I WAS THE ONE WHO *HIRED* THE ORIGINAL ARSENAL...

I EVEN LET THE DOOM PATROL KNOW WHERE TO *FIND* HIM SO HE COULD *TRAP* AND *DESTROY* THEM...

...HOPING THAT WITH THEIR DEATHS, THE COURTS WOULD *RETURN* YOU TO ME.

BUT THIS TIME I WON'T *FAIL*, BEAST BOY. *STEVEN DAYTON*, YOUR ADOPTIVE FATHER, IS THE *FIFTH RICHEST MAN* IN THE WORLD...

TELL HIM I WANT *TWENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS* OR THE GIRL WILL SOON JOIN HIS DEAD *WIFE*.

MAN, THAT MUST'A BEEN *ROUGH* ON YOU. I REMEMBER HOW *I* FELT WHEN THE TERMINATOR KIDNAPPED *SARAH*.

ACTUALLY, I WASN'T *WORRIED*. DAYTON MAKES *UNCLE SCROOGE* LOOK LIKE A WELFARE CASE.

TO HIM, 25 MILLION BUCKS IS *PETTY CHANGE*.

"ONLY, WHEN I CALLED HOME, THERE WAS ONE LITTLE *PROBLEM*. AND HIS NAME WAS *VERNON QUESTOR*..."

MR. DAYTON IS NOT *HERE*, MR. LOGAN.

I'M *SORRY*, SIR, BUT HE'S OFF SOMEWHERE SEARCHING FOR HIS WIFE'S *KILLERS*.

I BELIEVE HE'S SOMEWHERE IN *CENTRAL AMERICA* RIGHT NOW, BUT I CAN'T SAY WHERE FOR CERTAIN.

OKAY, QUESTOR, SKIP THE *TRAVELOGUE*.

JUST SEND ME THAT *MONEY*. FAST. OR THERE WILL BE *FLYING LEAD*.

I WOULD *LIKE* TO HELP, SIR, BUT I *CANNOT*.

I'M NOT *JOKING*, QUESTOR. YOU'RE DAYTON'S *BUSINESS MANAGER*. FREE UP SOME CASH--*FAST*.

17

I AM NOT *AUTHORIZED* TO MAKE SUCH A LARGE PERSONAL WITHDRAWAL.

MR. DAYTON DID NOT GIVE ME THAT *RIGHT*. THE BANKS WON'T ACCEPT MY *SIGNATURE*.

I AM TRULY *SORRY*.

"AT THAT MOMENT, I HATED DAYTON... MAYBE EVEN MORE THAN I DID GALTRY."

IT IS *TOO LATE*, BEAST BOY. YOU *FAILED*.

AND YOU CAN NO LONGER *HELP* ME.

BUT THE *GIRL* POSSIBLY CAN.

HER FATHER ISN'T AS *WEALTHY* AS DAYTON, BUT HE IS A *MILLIONAIRE*.

HE'LL GIVE ME *EVERYTHING* FOR HIS LITTLE GIRL... *WON'T* HE NOW, JILLIAN?

AS FOR *YOU*, BEAST BOY, YOU'RE NOW A *DEAD MAN*.

THE WALLS ARE *ELECTRIFIED*, AND THE ROOM *AIRTIGHT*.

YOU CAN'T BREAK FREE, WHICH MEANS YOU'LL *SUFFOCATE* FROM LACK OF *AIR*.

IN ABOUT *TEN MINUTES*, I'D SAY.

I'LL SAVE YOU, JILLIAN. I'LL...

SKREE!

GALTRY! DON'T *DARE* HURT HER! *GALTRY!!*

DAMN!

UMMM...

DON'T SAY IT, KORY.

HEROES ARE HARD TO FIND

YOU'RE GORGEOUS. I'D LOVE TO LEAVE YOU WITH MY PERSONALIZED HICKEYS--

HEROES ARE HARD TO FIND

--BUT, IF YOU SAY IT, I COULD LEARN TO HATE YOU.

SO YOU HAD TO ESCAPE FROM A LOCKED ROOM. THAT'S ROBIN'S KIND OF TRAP. HOW'D YOU GET OUT?

IF ROBBIE'S SUCH AN EXPERT, HOT-SHOT, LET HIM FIGGER IT OUT.

BURROW OUT AS A GOPHER?

NOT EVEN CLOSE. THE FLOOR WAS SOLID ROCK.

ONE DOWN, NINE TO GO. ARLENE FRANCIS?

ASK HIM IF HE BECAME AN ANT AND SQUEEZED HIS WAY FREE?

NAH. HE SAID THE ROOM WAS AIR-TIGHT.

HMM. THE FLOOR WASN'T ELECTRIFIED SINCE YOU WALKED ON IT.

YOU TURNED INTO AN ELECTRIC EEL AND SHORT-CIRCUITED THE ROOM.

NO, NOT YET. OOH, I LOVE THIS, ROBIN, THE TEEN WONDER-- STUMPED.

WAIT! WAIT! KNOWING YOU, I THINK I GOT IT.

DON'T KEEP IT TO YOURSELF, DICK.

GAR TURNED HIMSELF INTO A POR--

HOLD IT! LET ME HAVE THE HONORS.

I HADDA SMASH THE GLASS WITHOUT TOUCHING IT.

SO GUESS WHICH MACHO HERO BECAME AN INSTANT PORCUPINE...

...AND QUILLED HIS WAY TO FREEDOM?

C'MON, GUESS. IT'S NOT HARD.

WHAT'S SHORT AND GREEN AND IRRESISTIBLY CUTE?

THE FIRST ONE WHO SAYS 'AVOCADO DIP' IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.

19

"WHAM! I WAS OUT AND FREE...

"FREE AND LEAPING LIKE A LEOPARD TO FIND THAT PAIN IN THE ARSENAL."

"HOLD IT, GAR. IT TOOK ME SEVERAL MINUTES TO FIGURE MY WAY OUT.

HOW'D YOU DO IT SO FAST?

OH, IT ISN'T HARD WHEN YOU'RE AS GREAT AS I AM.

GAR!

OKAAAYY. THEY HAD A TRAP JUST LIKE THE ARSENAL'S ON "SPACE TREK". MY WRITERS USED THE SAME PORCUPINE GIMMICK.

SPOILSPORT.

"NOW YOU KNOW WHENEVER I BECOME AN ANIMAL, I TAKE ON ITS CHARACTERISTICS.

"SO THERE I WAS SNIFFING MY WAY THROUGH HIS FORTRESS...

"...UNTIL..."

YOU ESCAPED? YOU'RE BETTER THAN I HAD IMAGINED, BEAST BOY. BUT, IT WON'T HELP.

THE FIRST ARSENAL DESIGNED ALL THESE WEAPONS.

BEAST BOY, YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY ESCAPE.

WANNA BET, UGLY?

AND STOP CALLING ME BEAST BOY LIKE THE NAME IS POISON!

"FROM THE CORNER OF MY EYE I SAW JILLIAN. SHE WAS SO TERRIFIED.

"OBVIOUSLY, NOTHING LIKE THIS HAD EVER HAPPENED TO HER BEFORE.

20

"AND I WAS GOING TO MAKE CERTAIN IT NEVER HAPPENED AGAIN."

YOU ARE NO LONGER GAR LOGAN TO ME. YOU JOINED THAT DOOM PATROL. THEY STOLE YOU FROM ME WHEN THEY GAVE YOU THAT STUPID NAME, BEAST BOY.

I'LL KILL YOU, BEAST BOY. I'LL DESTROY YOU!

KRAK!

"WHAT CAN I TELL YOU? IF GALTRY EVER ENTERED THE MISS AMERICA PAGEANT, I'D LAY ODDS HE WOULDN'T WIN AS MISS CONGENIALITY."

"WELL, I HAD TO PLAN MY ATTACK, SO I RAN...

"... AT LEAST, I PRETENDED TO."

Y'KNOW SOMETHING, UGLY? YOU'VE SPOILED THAT NAME FOR ME. NOW I GOTTA CHANGE IT.

BY THE WAY, GALTRY--AM I BEING TOO MUCH OF A BUTT-HEAD FOR YOU?

POOM

GETTING YOUR GOAT, SO TO SPEAK?

THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR BEING SO GRUFF.

WHY DON'TCHA LAMB OUTTA HERE WHILE YOU STILL GOT THE CHANCE?

KRASH!

"GOLDIE, YOU WOULD'A LOVED THE FIGHT. I WAS ON THE OFFENSIVE--NO WISE CRACKS FROM YOU, STONE, ABOUT MY NEEDING DEODORANTS.

"TROUBLE IS, BOZO HAD A FEW GIMMICKS OF HIS OWN.

"I NEARLY BURNED OFF MY TAIL FEATHERS...

"...WHILE HE WAS MAKING IT A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN TONIGHT. STILL, I GOT MY FATHEAD OUT OF THE FIRE, SO TO SPEAK.

21

"UNFORTUN-ATELY, CREEPO WAS READY. I TOLD YOU THE WHOLE PLACE WAS ONE BIG DEATH TRAP.

"MAYBE THAT SHOULD'VE MADE ME FEEL IMPORTANT, HIM SETTING ALL THAT UP JUST FOR ME--

BLAM

SPAMM

BTAMM

"--BUT I WAS TOO BUSY TRYING TO SAVE MY READY-TO-WEAR HIDE."

NOW YOU'RE DOOMED, BEAST BOY. POISON GAS WILL DESTROY YOU.

"OKAY, MAYBE I'M NOT SUCH A BIG TIME ESCAPE ARTIST LIKE DICK OR THE BIG BAD BATMAN...

"BUT WE SHAPE-CHANGERS ARE FAR FROM HELP-LESS.

"I POOFED INTO A WORM AND SLITHERED BELOW THE GAS...

"...WHERE I CAUGHT MY BREATH AND PROVED ONCE AND FOR ALL HOW STUPID I CAN SOMETIMES BE.

HEY, GALTRY--YOO-HOO. THIS WAY, STUPID!

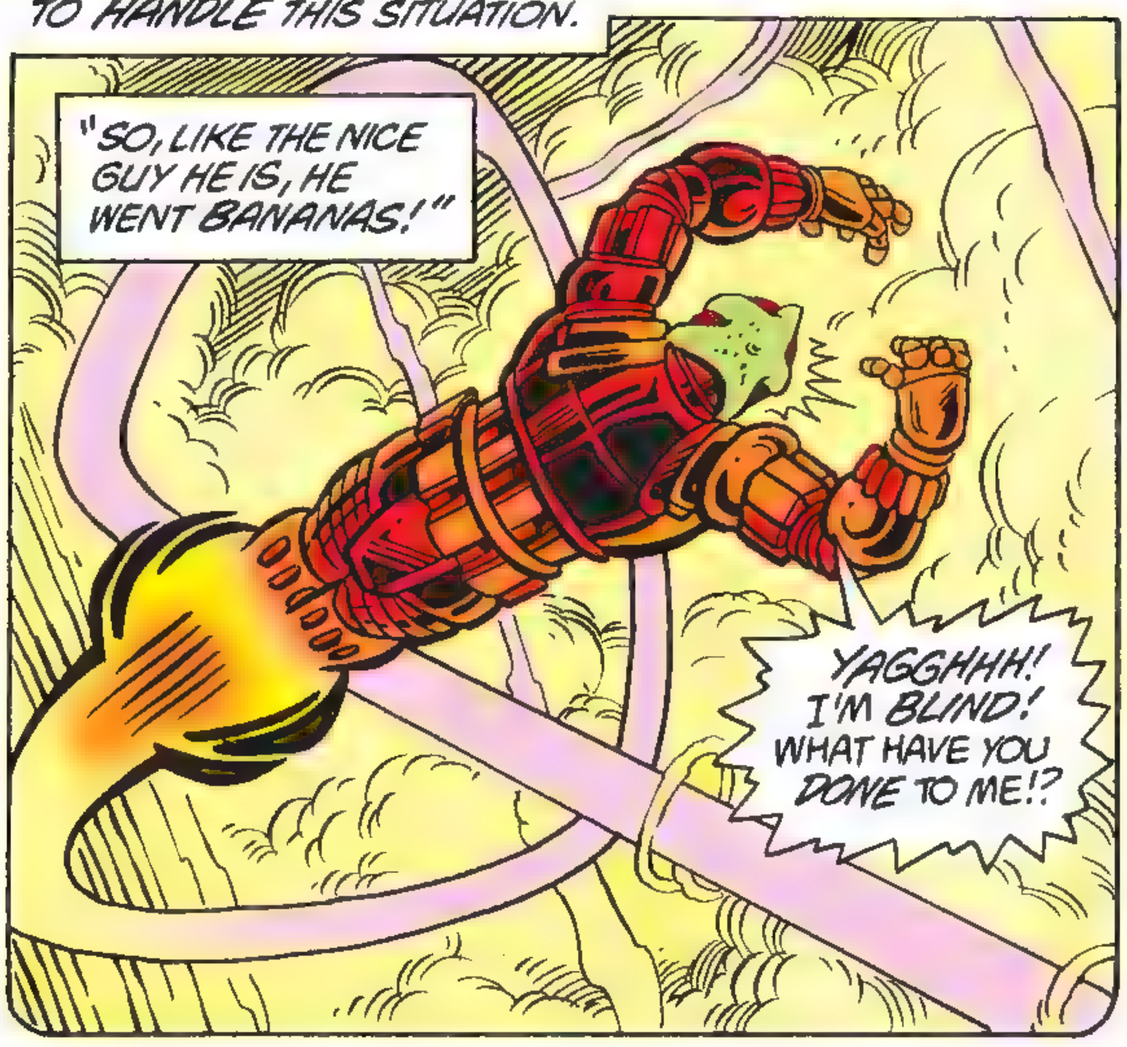
I WANNA MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION ON YOU.

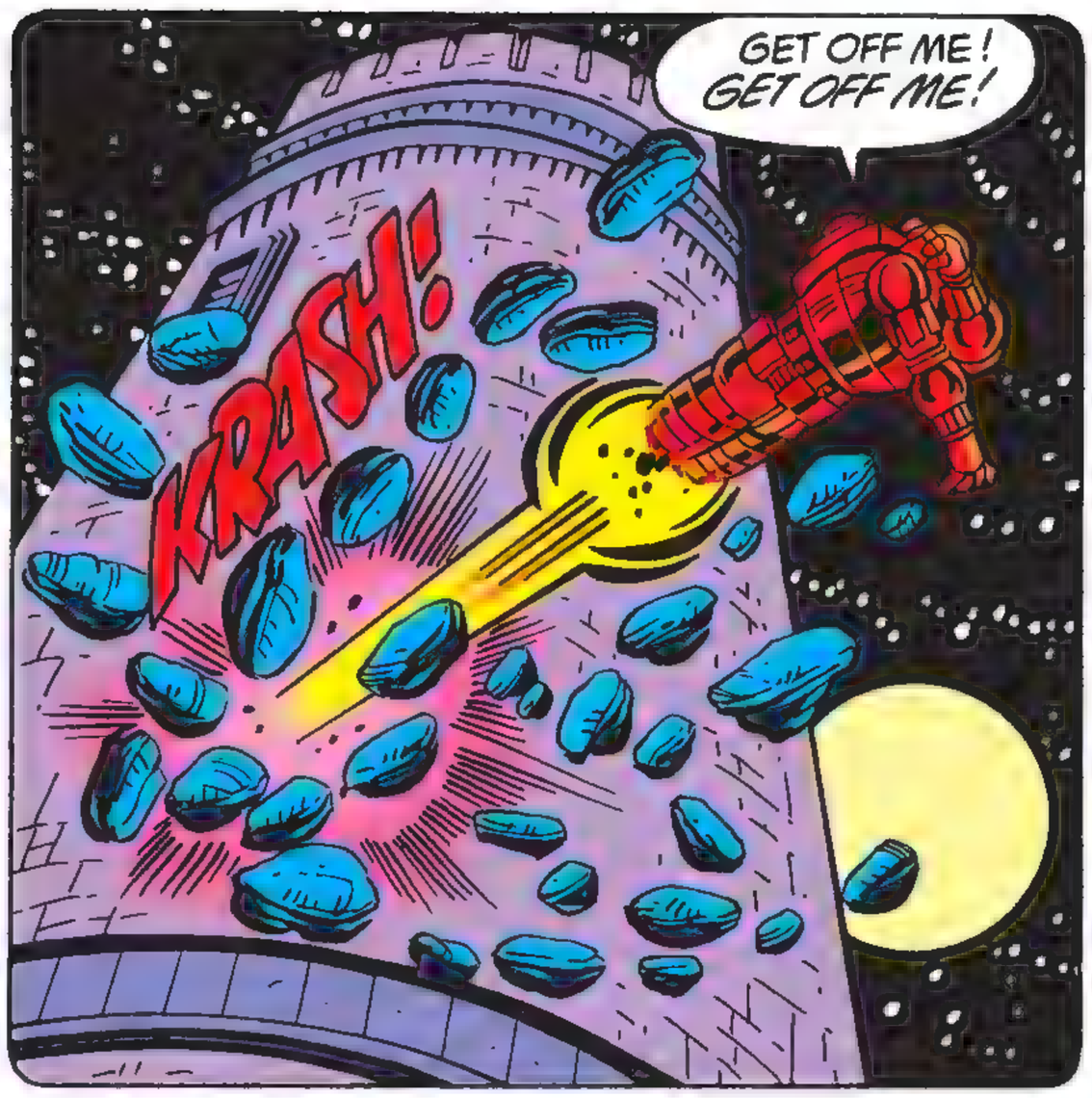
"WHAP! I CLUNG TO HIS FACE LIKE SARAN WRAP. I COULD TELL MY PAL WAS NOT EXACTLY HAPPY."

YOU FOOL! I--I CAN'T SEE!

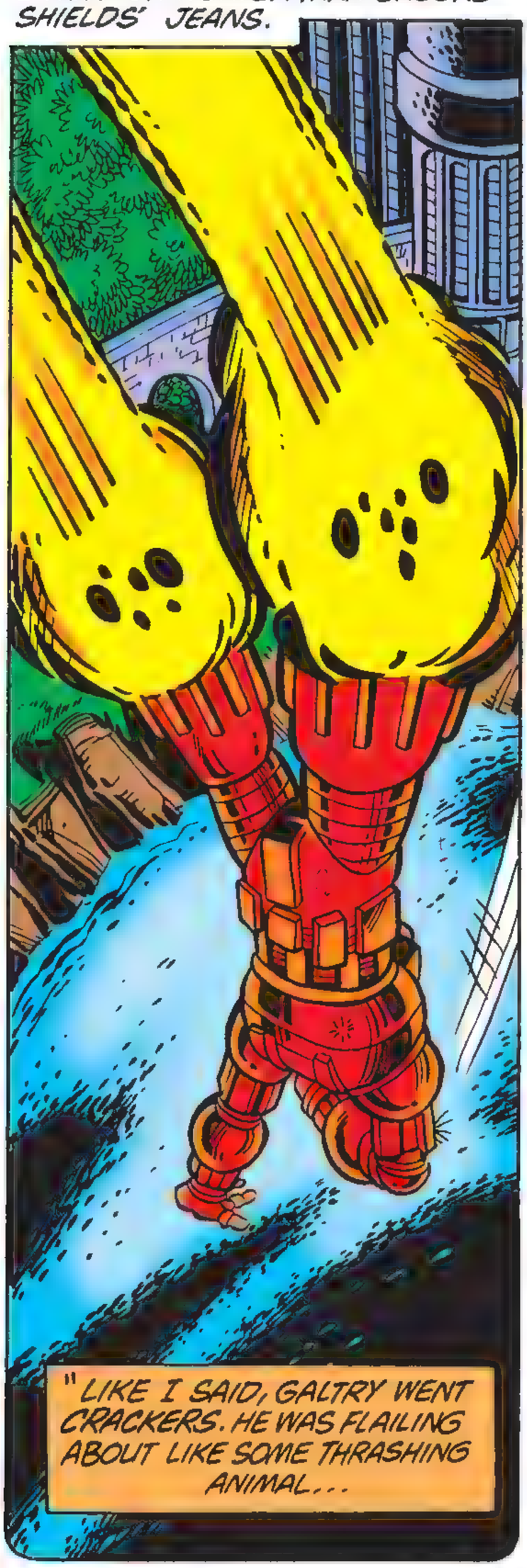
22

"YOU GOTTA REMEMBER, GALTRY WASN'T REALLY A TRAINED SUPER-BADDIE. HE DIDN'T QUITE KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THIS SITUATION.

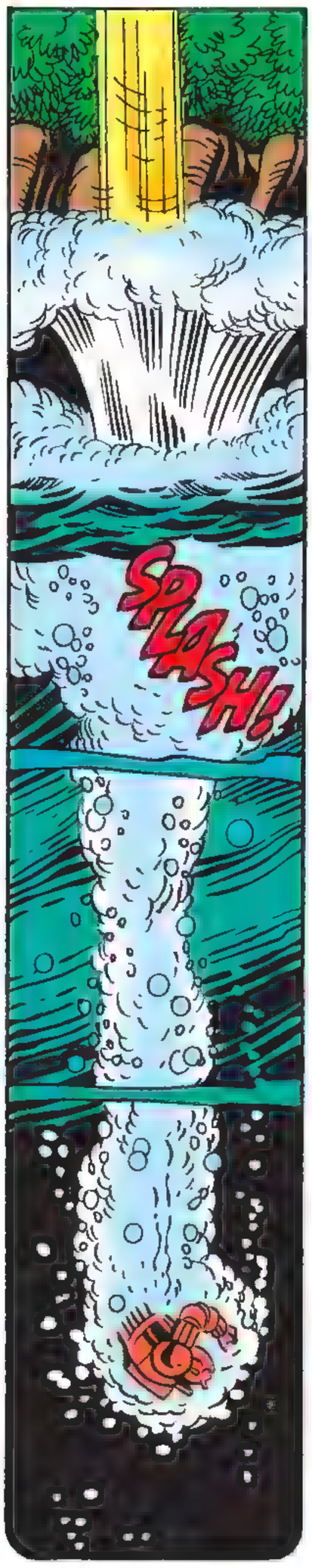


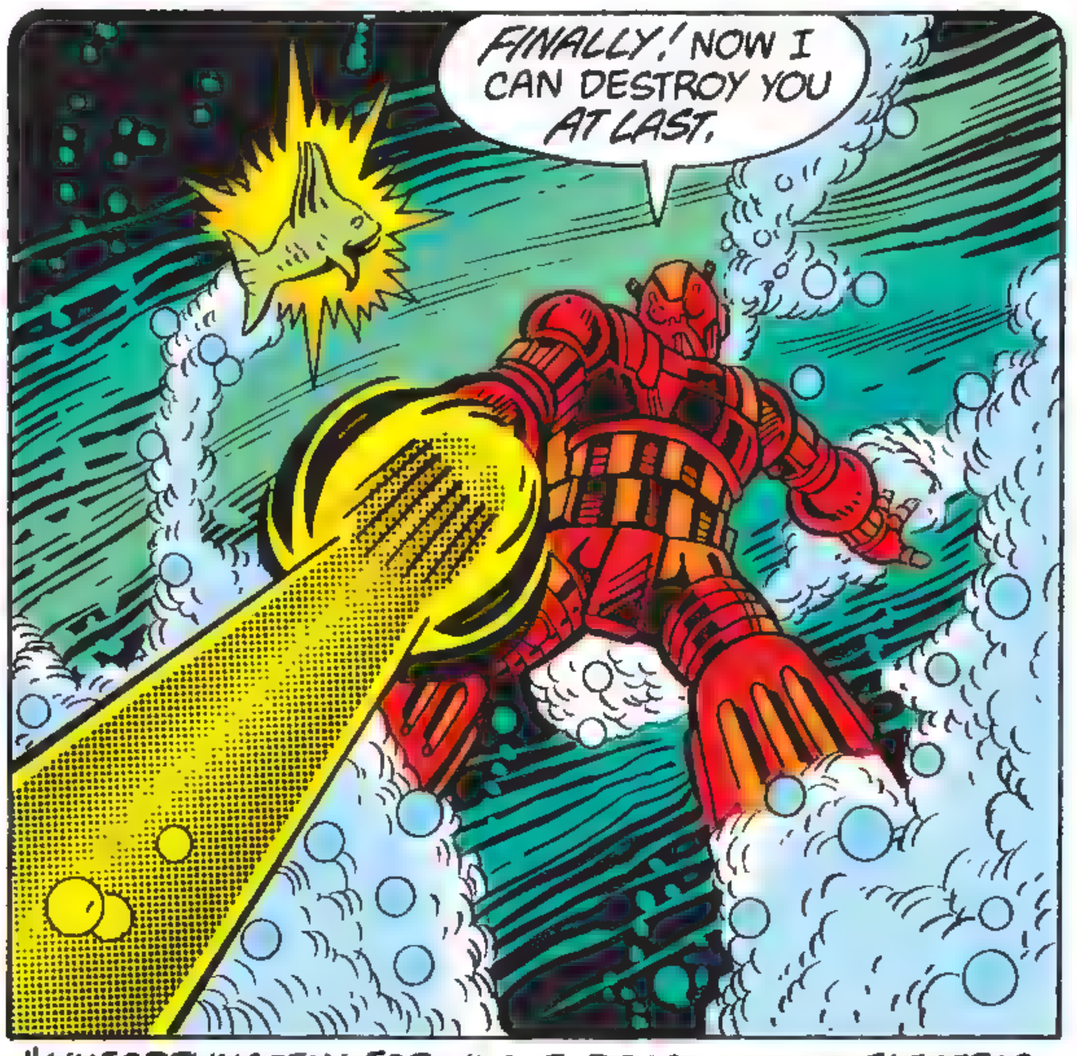


"NATCH, I DIDN'T LISTEN. INSTEAD, I HELD ON TIGHTER THAN BROOKE SHIELDS' JEANS.



...UNTIL HE FELL INTO THE LAKE WHICH WAS BUILT IN THE CASTLE'S CENTER CLOISTER."





"UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, I BECAME THAT ELECTRIC EEL DICK MENTIONED A WHILE BACK--



"LIKE I SAID, GALTRY WENT CRACKERS. HE WAS FLAILING ABOUT LIKE SOME THRASHING ANIMAL...

23

"AND THE BEST THING IS CON EDISON DIDN'T EVEN SEND ME A BILL FOR ALL THAT ELECTRIC POWER. WELL, I TOSSED GRUESOME OUT OF THE LAKE...

...TOOK CARE OF HIS SUIT...

"...AND WAS READY TO FINISH OFF GALTRY HIMSELF.

"I KEPT REMEMBERING ALL THE BEATINGS HE GAVE ME AS A KID...

...HOW HE TRIED TO KILL THE DOOM PATROL.

...HOW HE JUST TRIED TO KILL ME...

"...BUT, ABOVE IT ALL, HOW HE HAD KIDNAPPED AND THREATENED JILLIAN.

"AND I LET HIM KNOW JUST HOW UNHAPPY I WAS ABOUT IT ALL.

SPAMM!

"I STARED AT HIM FOR A LONG WHILE AS HE CRAWLED ON THE BEACH LIKE SOME FILTHY WORM. AND, YOU KNOW, FOR A WHILE, I FELT REAL GOOD.

"BUT THEN THAT CHANGED. GALTRY WAS NOTHING, BUT HE BROUGHT OUT AN ANGER IN ME THAT I DIDN'T LIKE.

"THE ANGER THAT HAD BEEN GROWING WITHIN ME EVER SINCE THE DOOM PATROL HAD DIED.

"AN ANGER I VOWED TO GET RID OF. AND I DID, UNTIL WE FOUND THE PATROL'S KILLERS. THEN IT CAME BACK... IT ALL CAME BACK."

24

BUT IT'S *GONE* NOW. I HOPE *FOREVER.*

SO THAT'S THE STORY OF *GARFIELD LOGAN*, BOY HERO, GIRL CHASER, AND SUPER-HERO SUPREME.

YOU THINK I CAN SELL THE *MOVIE RIGHTS?*

MAYBE THEY'D GET *HARRISON FORD* TO PLAY ME? EH?

GARFIELD...

OKAY! THESE HOT DOGS HAVE A *GRUDGE* AGAINST ME. MAYBE I ONCE ATE THEIR *COUSINS.*

I GIVE UP! I'LL *STARVE* TO DEATH. THAT'LL SHOW 'EM.

NAH. WHILE YOU WERE TALKING I COOKED THESE UP USIN' MY *INTERNAL GENERATOR.*

HAVE SOME, WILLYA?

'SIDES, WHILE YOU'RE EATING YOU CAN'T *TALK...*

AND BELIEVE ME, BROTHER--WE *ALL* NEED A REST AFTER THAT.

ONLY QUESTION *I* HAVE IS--IF YOU *USED* TO BE SO GREAT, WHAT'S HAPPENED *SINCE?*

WEST?

YEAH, LOGAN?

YOU WANNA MAKE A CAREER OUTTA BEING THE *FASTEST* CORPSE ALIVE?

SIGH... ALL THAT REMI-NISCING...

HER AREN TO

...REMINDS ME OF *TAMARAN.*

I WONDER IF I'LL EVER SEE MY *HOMEWORLD* AGAIN?

NEXT: THE STORY OF STARFIRE!

25


DC
MINI • SERIES 4 OF 4
TALES OF
THE NEW TEEN
TITANS
STARRING
STARFIRE
60¢
U.K. 20p
NO. 4
SEPT.
REVEALED AT LAST!
THE SHOCKING
SECRET LIFE OF
PRINCESS
KORIAND'R!

TALES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS™

STARFIRE™

CREATED BY WOLFMAN & PÉREZ

LOOK AT THE ***SUN***, SHE HAD SAID. SO BEAUTIFUL AND PROMISING. IT INSPIRES HOPE, CREATES LIFE, GIVES REASON TO ***LOVE.***

SHE THEN STRETCHED FORTH HER LONG, SLENDER ARMS, AND LIKE ***ICARUS*** OF LEGEND, ROSE TO TOUCH THE SUN.

MARV & GEORGE
WOLFMAN & PÉREZ
WRITER–CO-PLOTTERS-ARTIST
ERNIE COLÓN, EMBELLISHER
TODD KLEIN, LETTERER
ADRIENNE ROY, COLORIST
LEN WEIN, EDITOR

1

KORIAND'R'S AT *HOME* UP THERE, ISN'T SHE, DONNA?

IT'S WHERE SHE MOST COMES *ALIVE*, DICK.

I'VE WATCHED HER STARE AT THE SUN FOR *HOURS*, DRINKING IN ITS SPECIAL *WARMTH*.

MAN, I'M SORRY THIS TRIP IS *OVER*, BUT I'M GLAD WE'RE HEADIN' BACK TO *NEW YORK*.

YOU'RE *KIDDING*, VIC. FRANKLY, IT'S TOO *DIRTY* THERE FOR ME.

GIVE ME *BLUE VALLEY* ANY DAY.

C'MON, WALLY, THAT PLACE IS THE *ARMPIT* OF THE MID-WEST.

ME, I ♥ NEW YORK!

DO WE *REALLY* HAVE TO GO HOME, GUYS?

I *LOVE* IT HERE. THE AIR'S SO FRESH AND YOU CAN'T SEE *BUILDINGS* NO MATTER WHERE YOU LOOK.

WELL, *I'VE* GOT TO GET BACK. *INTERSESSION* ONLY LASTS SO LONG.

THAT'S RIGHT, DICK. YOU'VE GONE BACK TO COLLEGE.

OH, WELL. I GUESS ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO AN *END*.

BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER *FORGET* THIS VACATION. IT WAS JUST *WONDERFUL*.

I SENSED SUCH *HAPPINESS* IN YOU WHILE YOU WERE FLYING.

IT'S THE *SUN*, RAVEN. IT GIVES ME MY STRENGTH, MY *POWER*.

AND IT REMINDS ME OF MY *HOME*.

THE PLANET YOU CALL *TAMARAN*?

≡SIGHH≡ GOD CERTAINLY HAD HIS *ACT* TOGETHER WHEN HE FIRST ENVISIONED *KORY*.

EYES *IN*, SALAD-HEAD. SHE ONLY HAS EYES FOR *DICK*.

I CAN *DREAM*, CAN'T I?

YES. BEAUTIFUL, GLORIOUS *TAMARAN*.

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF IT STILL IS *THERE*.

2

RAVEN, YOU SAID *AZARATH* WAS MAGNIFICENT. WELL, TAMARAN WAS SHEER *SPLENDOR* ITSELF.

WE'RE THE *EIGHTH* PLANET FROM OUR SUN, THE STAR YOU CALL *VEGA*...

"...BUT TAMARAN WAS STILL A *TROPICAL PARADISE.*

"THE AIR ALMOST SEEMED SCENTED WITH *PERFUME*, THE SKIES SHIMMERED WITH A GOLDEN GLOW.

"MAN AND NATURE STOOD SIDE-BY-SIDE *TOGETHER*...

"...AND THE ONLY ORDER ON TAMARAN WAS *LOVE.* OURS IS A PLANET RULED BY PASSIONS AND EMOTIONS...

"A PLANET WHERE *SCIENCE* SERVED ONLY TO HEIGHTEN OUR BEINGS, NOT TO FEED OUR GREED.

"WITH MORE THAN ENOUGH FOOD AND LAND FOR EVERYONE, THERE WAS NO NEED FOR *WARS.* AND OUR PALACES WERE NOT BUILT FOR *PROTECTION*...

"...BUT FOR *PEACE.*

"YES, IT WAS PARADISE. AND IT COULD NOT POSSIBLY LAST *FOREVER.*"

MYAND'R, *HURRY!* YOUR WIFE IS IN *LABOR.*

IS SHE ALL RIGHT? IS THE *MEDICOR* WITH HER?

HOW *IS* SHE, WOMAN? *TELL* ME!

"I WAS BORN AT *DAWN*-- THE HOUR OF *INNOCENCE*, THEY SAY-- WHEN THE DAY IS YET TO BE AND STILL BRIMMING WITH HOPE AND POSSIBILITIES.

"MY FATHER, TAMARAN'S *KING*, SHOWED ME TO THE ASSEMBLY."

HER *FLESH* IS LIKE GOLD AND HER *EYES* ARE AS GREEN AS HER MOTHER'S.

LOOK, EVERYONE AT MY *PRIDE:*

HER NAME IS *PRINCESS KORIAND'R*, AND LIKE UNTO HER NAME, MAY SHE FOREVER SEE THE OPTIMISM OF *TOMORROWS.*

3

"ALL TAMARAN REJOICED AT MY BIRTH. ALL, THAT IS, BUT *ONE*: MY SISTER, *KOMAND'R*.

FROM THE MOMENT I WAS BORN, KOMAND'R *DESPISED* ME. SHE HAD BEEN *SICKLY* AT BIRTH, JUDGED UNFIT TO EVENTUALLY *RULE*.

I WAS GIVEN THE HONOR OF *PRINCESS* WHICH SHE SO COVETED.

ONE DAY *I* WOULD RULE, NOT SHE.

YOU MAKE HER SOUND LIKE *LUCRECIA BORGIA* AND *DARTH VADER* ROLLED UP INTO ONE.

MY SISTER IS *EVIL*. HER *SOUL* IS BLACK AS DEATH ITSELF.

EVEN WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN THE *DIFFERENCES* BETWEEN US WERE SO VERY *APPARENT*.

LUAND'R, LOOK. SHE *LOVES* HER PET.

I'D SAY THEY LOVE *EACH OTHER*.

"UNTIL..." WHAT *HAPPENED* HERE, KOMAND'R? WHO KILLED THE *DROR*?

I DO NOT *KNOW*, MOTHER. IT WAS *DEAD* WHEN I FOUND IT.

"BUT THERE WAS ONE THING *I* COULD DO THAT SHE *NEVER* COULD. BECAUSE OF HER SICKNESS, SHE WAS UNABLE TO *HARNESS* THE SOLAR WINDS AND *SOAR* UNFETTERED IN THE SKIES.

"THOSE WERE SUCH *HAPPY* DAYS FOR ME...

"...THOUGH DAYS KOMAND'R SPENT IN PLOTTING HER *VENGEANCE*, I AM SURE.

"SNAR AND I WERE AS ONE. ALL DAY WE'D *PLAY* TOGETHER.

"I NEVER *BELIEVED* HER. SHE HAD *KILLED* MY PET AS SHE TRIED TO KILL *EVERYTHING* THAT WAS MINE.

"HER HATE FOR ME AND FOR ALL TAMARAN *GREW* WITH EVERY PASSING YEAR." 4

WAS SHE *UNLOVED?* DID YOUR PARENTS *FAVOR* YOU OVER HER?

NOT AT FIRST, RAVEN. THEY LOVED US *BOTH.* BUT EVENTUALLY IT BECAME *IMPOSSIBLE* TO LOVE THAT TRAITRESS.

KEEP *TALKING,* KORY. I'M JUST PUTTING ON MY *ROBIN* UNIFORM. IT'S ALMOST TIME TO TAKE THE T-JET *HOME.*

HOW DID YOU AND KOMAND'R EVER *LIVE* TOGETHER UNDER THE SAME *ROOF?*

SHE WAS MY OLDER SISTER, WALLY. I *WANTED* HER TO LIKE ME.

BUT KOMAND'R ONLY *AVOIDED* ME.

I TOLD YOU TAMARAN BELIEVED IN *PEACE,* BUT WE ALSO KNEW THE *TRAGEDY* OF WAR.

"THE CITADEL WAS THE PLANET *CLOSEST* TO OUR SUN--AND FOR MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS THEY HAD SENT THEIR WARSHIPS AGAINST US. THEY NEEDED OUR *FOOD* TO SUSTAIN THEM. AND OUR PEOPLE TO BE THEIR *SLAVES.*"

SIRE, OUR SCANNERS HAVE PICKED UP *CITADEL WARSHIPS.*

IT'S ANOTHER *ATTACK.*

THEN, BY X'HAL, WE'LL BATTLE THOSE FILTH BACK TO THEIR *RINGED FORTRESS.*

COMMAND OUR SOLDIERS TO MAN ALL *FLIERS!*

"WE BELIEVED IN PEACE, BUT WE ACCEPTED THE *NECESSITIES* OF WAR.

"*LEFT ALONE,* WE CHERISHED THE JOYS OF NATURE. PROVOKED, WE LUSTED AFTER THE BLOOD OF *BATTLE.*

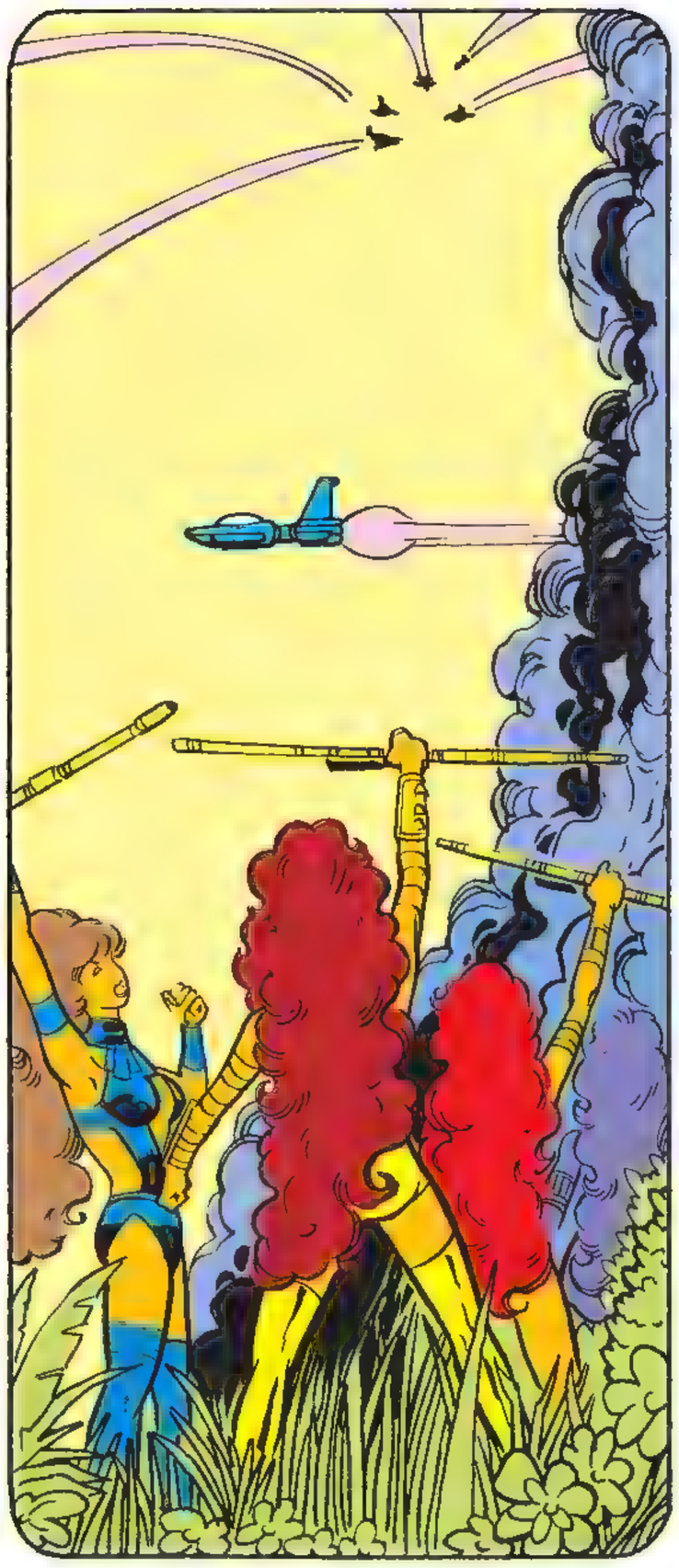
"SUCH WAS OUR *DUAL NATURE,* AND SUCH WAS THE WAY WE *LIVED.*"

5

"I CAN TELL YOU WITH *PRIDE*...

"--THERE WAS NO ONE *BETTER*."

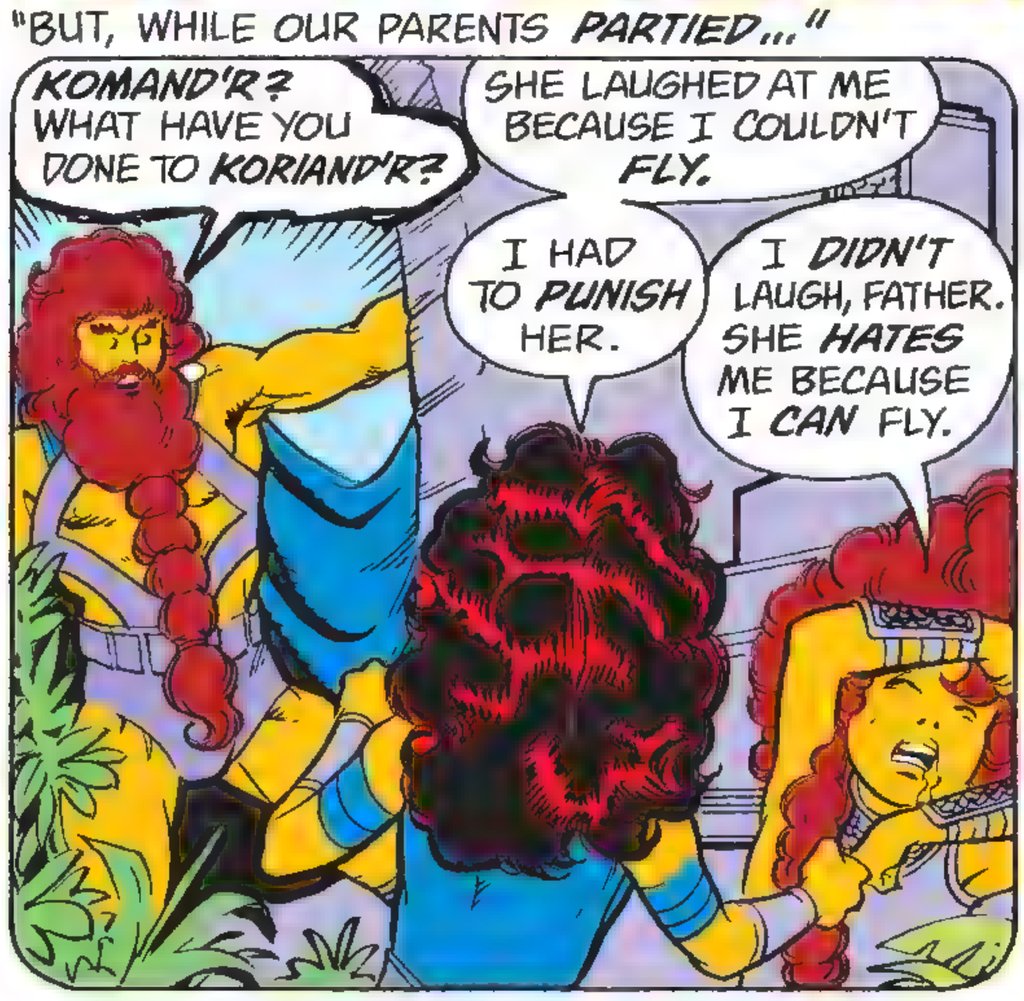
"WHEN WE *FOUGHT*--



"VICTORIOUS, WE SENT THE CURSED CITADEL SOLDIERS SCAMPERING LIKE DOGS TO THEIR *DEN.*



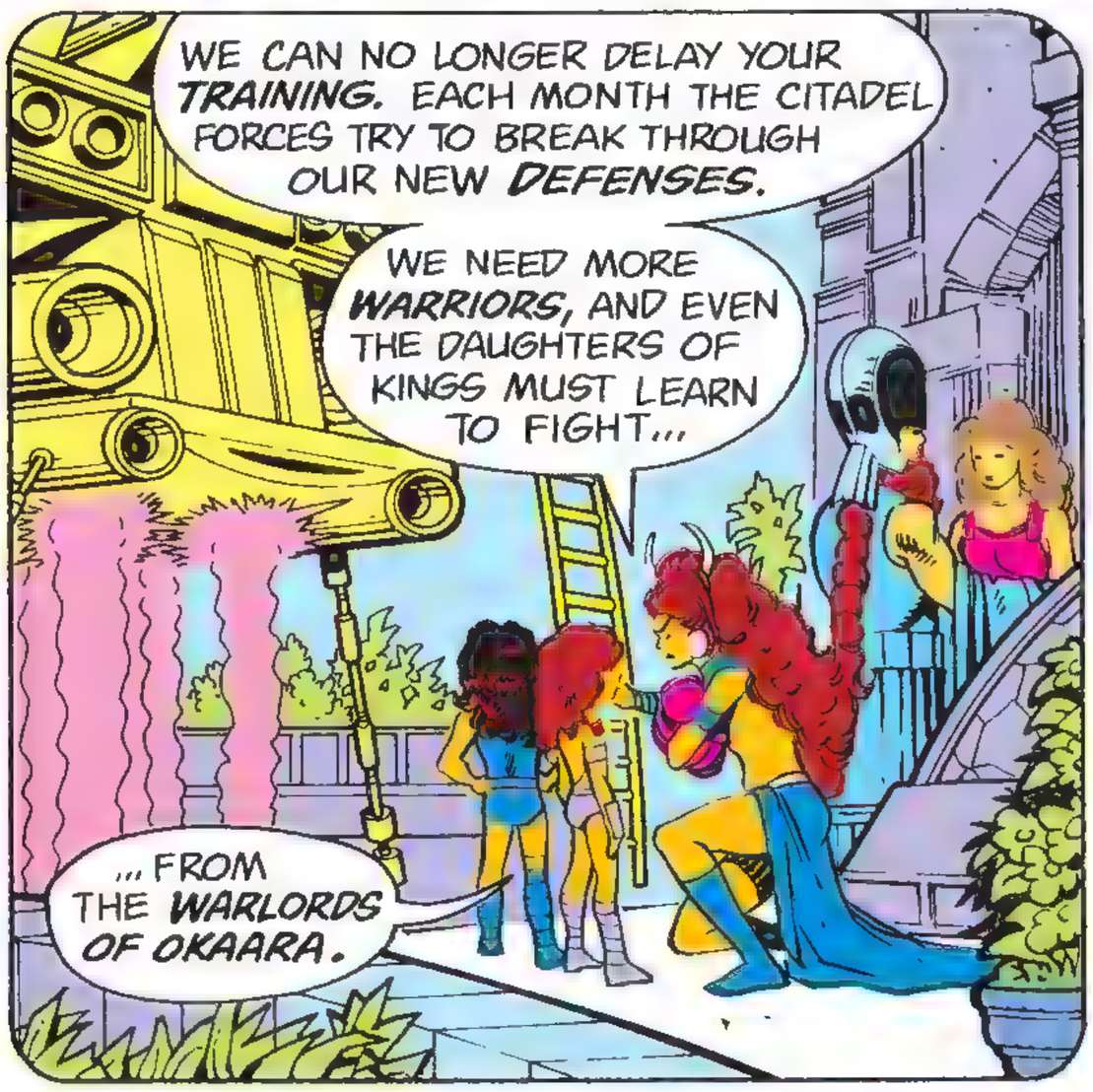
"BUT, WHILE OUR PARENTS *PARTIED...*"



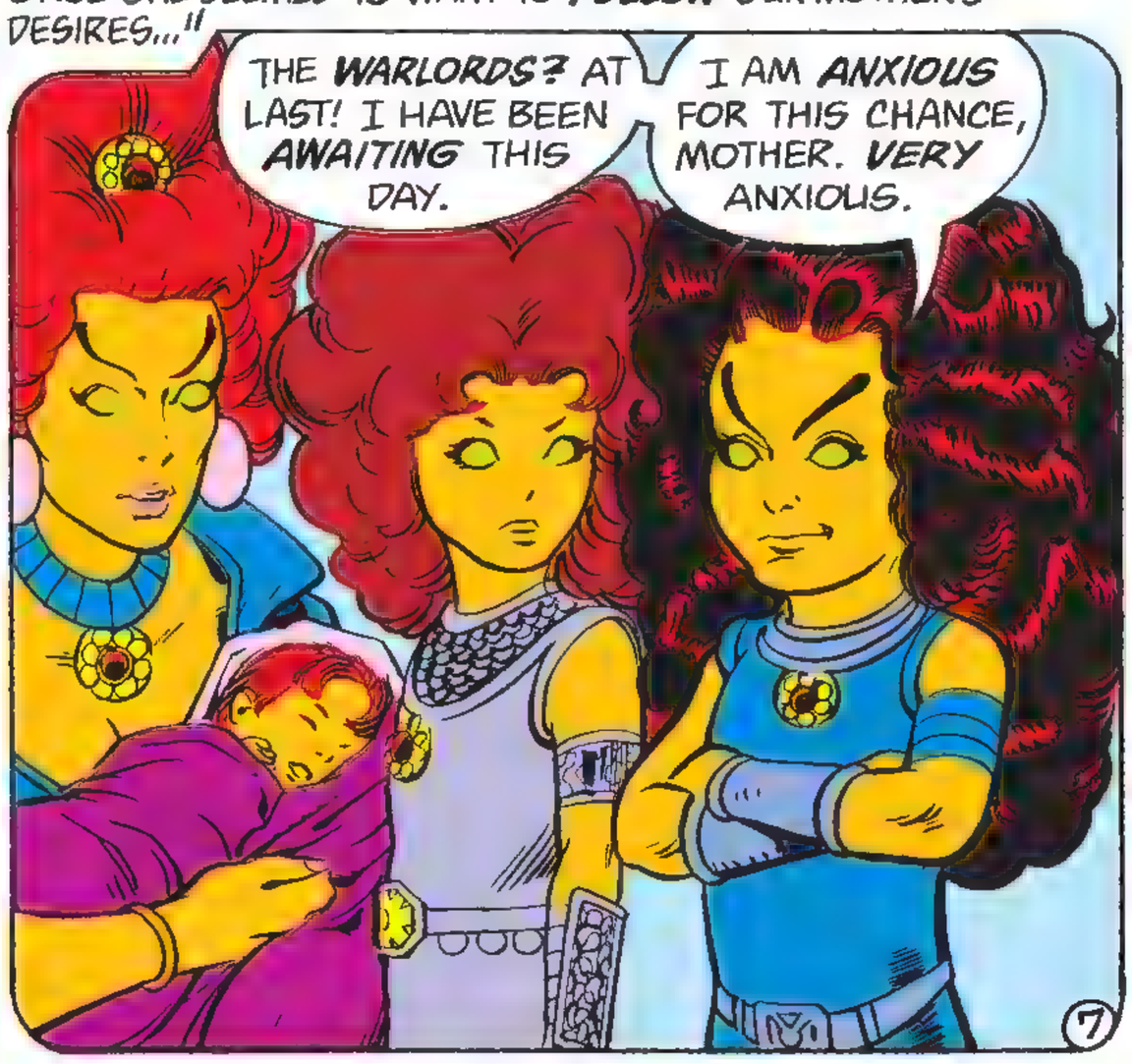




"WE GREW UP AND *APART,* WITH KOMAND'R STAYING MORE AND MORE TO HERSELF. BUT THEN..."



"WITH THE BIRTH OF OUR BROTHER *RYAND'R,* KOMAND'R GREW EVEN *MORE* RESENTFUL, MORE *HATEFUL.* YET FOR ONCE SHE SEEMED TO WANT TO *FOLLOW* OUR MOTHER'S DESIRES..."



"OKAARA! THAT WORD WAS ALMOST *MYSTICAL* TO US.

"FOR YEARS, I, *TOO*, HAD WANTED TO MAKE MY PILGRIMAGE THERE. NOW I WOULD FINALLY GET THE *CHANCE*."

IT'S *BEAUTIFUL*, MOTHER...YOU CAN SEE ALMOST *FOREVER* OUT IN SPACE.

WHY DO WE HAVE TO *SHARE* THIS TRANSPORT SHIP WITH ALL THE DREGS OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM?

LOOK AT THEM! WEAKLINGS, *ALL* OF THEM. THEY THINK THIS IS A *PARTY*.

DON'T THEY KNOW WE'RE GOING TO OKAARA TO LEARN TO *KILL*?

"THE *DREGS*, SHE CALLED ALL THE OTHERS. BUT LIKE US, THEY WERE THE CHILDREN OF *CHIEFTAINS*. THEY WERE THE *BEST* OUR PLANETARY SYSTEM HAD TO OFFER."

OH, MOTHER-- *LOOK*. IT'S *OKAARA*.

IT'S EVEN *MORE* MAGNIFICENT THAN THE HOLOGRAMS SHOWED.

"SHE WAS A ROCKY HUSK ON THE OUTSIDE. BUT *INSIDE*... AHH, YOU WILL HAVE TO *SEE* IT SOMEDAY.

"OKAARA WAS A PLANET THAT HAD *DIED* A MILLION YEARS BEFORE LIFE EMERGED ON ANY OTHER VEGAN WORLD...

"THERE WERE TUNNELS AND CAVERNS EVERYWHERE...

"...AND THEY EACH *REFLECTED* THE LIGHT IN A DIFFERENT WAY. EVERY COLOR POSSIBLE WAS THERE. I WILL NEVER FORGET ITS *MAJESTY*... ITS *POWER*. ⑧

OKAARA WAS ALSO THE HOME OF ***X'HAL***, OUR LIVING GODDESS.

YOU MEAN SHE WAS ***REAL***, LIKE RAVEN'S ***AZAR***?

REAL, OH ***YES***. BUT ALSO ***REMOVED*** FROM ALL REALITY.

"I NEVER ***SAW*** X'HAL WHILE ON OKAARA, BUT I COULD ***FEEL*** HER PRESENCE AMONGST US. ANYWAY, THE ***CHILDREN***-- KOMAND'R AND I WERE BUT ***TWO***-- WERE BROUGHT BEFORE THE FABLED WARLORDS.

"I MUST ADMIT THEIR PRESENCE ***FRIGHTENED*** ME.

FOR MORE MILLENNIA THAN CAN EASILY BE COUNTED WE HAVE ***TRAINED*** THE CHILDREN OF OUR MOTHER STAR.

WE BRING YOU TO OKAARA TO TEACH YOU NOT ONLY THE ARTS OF ***WARFARE***, BUT THOSE OF THE ***HUMANITIES***.

THE TWO MUST BE FOREVER ***ENTWINED***.

TEACH US TO ***KILL***. THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERS.

TO KILL IS ***NOTHING***. ANYONE CAN KILL. IT TAKES NO ***SKILL*** TO TWIST DAGGER THROUGH FLESH.

TO ACHIEVE ***PEACE*** IS THE GREATEST GOAL THAT CAN BE REACHED. BUT...

...WHEN ONE MUST ***FIGHT*** TO ACHIEVE THAT PEACE, ONE MUST FIGHT TO ***WIN***.

BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG THERE CAN BE NO ***COMPROMISE*** ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

"HOW CAN I TELL YOU WHAT IT *FELT* LIKE, TRAINING ON OKAARA?

"OUR FIRST YEAR WAS SPENT LEARNING TO *APPRECIATE* ALL THAT WAS ABOUT US, TO KNOW WHAT WAS *WORTH* FIGHTING FOR ...

"...WHEN THERE WAS NO *ESCAPE* FROM BATTLE.

"THEN WE LEARNED THE ART OF *WARFARE*. EVERY MANNER OF FIGHTING WAS TAUGHT US.

"WE WERE SHOWN HOW TO LOVE OUR FRIEND AND HOW TO HATE OUR ENEMY. WE LEARNED OF *COMPASSION*--

"--AND *COMPROMISE*. BUT WE ALSO LEARNED THAT WHEN THEY FAILED, THERE WAS ONLY ONE RECOURSE: *WAR!*

"AND IN WAR, THERE COULD BE ONLY ONE OUT-COME: *VICTORY!*

"ON OKAARA I GREW FROM YOUNG CHILD INTO YOUNG *WOMAN*. AND SOON I WOULD RETURN HOME TO MY *PARENTS*.

"BUT FIRST THERE WOULD BE THE *TOURNAMENT*."

10

SO YOU WERE *USED* TO TOURNAMENTS? NO WONDER YOU DID SO WELL ON *PARADISE ISLAND.*

THE TOURNAMENT WAS A MANNER OF *GRADUATION EXERCISE.*

AND I EXCELLED IN ITS *FUNDAMENTALS.*

"KOMAND'R AND I WERE TO FACE EACH OTHER WITH *SOLAR LANCES.*

"A NEAR SWIPE WOULD *DISLODGE* YOUR OPPONENT FROM HIS MOUNT. THE ONE WHO FELL WOULD *LOSE.*

"WE WAITED FOR THE SIGNAL TO *BEGIN...*

"...AT LEAST *I* DID. KOMAND'R RUSHED FORWARD.

"OUR FIRST CHARGE WAS A *DRAW.* OUR LANCES CLANGED TOGETHER WITH NO WINNER OR LOSER.

"WE TURNED TO FACE EACH OTHER *AGAIN.*

"HER LANCE ARCED *DOWN* AND I SHOVED MINE *UP.* BUT SHE HAD THE UPPER HAND AND I FELT MYSELF ABOUT TO FALL.

"ONLY WITH PAINFUL EFFORT DID I *STOP* MY PLUNGE.

"BUT KOMAND'R TOOK *ADVANTAGE* OF MY MOMENTARY WEAKNESS WITH AN ACT THAT ONLY DEMONSTRATES HER *SAVAGERY.*

"HER BLADE SLICED THROUGH MY MOUNT'S *LEG.*

11

"IT WAS AGAINST ALL THE RULES, BUT RULES MEANT ***NOTHING*** TO KOMAND'R. MY BEAST ***DIED*** AND I FELL HELPLESS TO THE GROUND."

SHOULD WE ***STOP*** THE FIGHT?

NO. I WANT TO SEE HOW KORIAND'R ***FARES.***

YOU LOOK SO ***PITIFUL,*** SISTER.

I SHOULD ***KILL*** YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID.

YOU ***SHOULD,*** SHOULD YOU?

WELL, LITTLE SISTER, YOU HAVEN'T HALF THE STRENGTH TO ***DO*** THAT.

STILL, THIS IS MY CHANCE TO SHOW EVERYONE HOW ***WEAK*** YOU TRULY ARE.

COME ON, KORIAND'R...

...WE'RE GOING FOR A LITTLE ***RIDE.***

"MY FLESH WAS TORN AGAINST THE JAGGED ROCK. STILL, I COULD DO NOTHING BUT ***HOLD ON.*** SURELY THE WARLORDS WOULD ***STOP*** THIS MADNESS...

"BUT THEY ***DIDN'T.***"

VERY GOOD, SISTER. YOU HAVEN'T YET ***CRIED OUT.***

LET US SEE HOW MUCH LONGER YOUR STOIC POSE CAN ***LAST.***

"BUT THE PAIN HAD BECOME ***TERRIBLE...***

"...AND SO, I REACHED FOR MY ***SWORD...***"

12

"...AND *DREW* IT--

"--HACKING AT THE *ROPES* WHICH BOUND ME.

"FOR THE MOMENT I WAS *FREE*...

"...BUT KOMAND'R HAD NO INTENTIONS OF LETTING ME REGAIN MY *BREATH*."

STAY *AWAY* FROM ME, KOMAND'R.

I *DESPISE* YOU!

"IT *DIDN'T*."

"BOTH BEAST AND KOMAND'R FELL INTO THE *CREVASSE*. I FLEW IN *AFTER* HER.

"REMEMBER, MY SISTER COULD NOT *FLY*...

"MY *SHIELD* SLAMMED INTO HER BEAST'S LEGS AS PLANNED...

"BUT I THOUGHT IT WOULD MERELY FALL TO THE GROUND.

OH, *NO*! KOMAND'R!!

"...AND I WAS NOT ABOUT TO LET *HER* DIE. AT LEAST NOT *THEN*.

"OH, YES, I WAS A *FOOL*. BUT I *SAVED* HER.

13

"...NOT THAT SHE WAS *GRATEFUL*."

ARE YOU *ALL RIGHT*, KOMAND'R?

HOW DARE YOU *HUMILIATE* ME, KORIAND'R?

I WANTED YOU *DEAD*--

--AND YET YOU *SAVED* ME.

YOU ARE *WEAK*, SISTER. AND WORSE, YOU ARE A *FOOL*.

DIDN'T YOU *LEARN* ANYTHING HERE?

YOU NEVER LET AN ENEMY *SURVIVE*.

NEVER!

NO! THAT IS ENOUGH!

WHAT?

YOU ARE WITHOUT A *HEART* OR A *SOUL*.

YOU WALLOW IN YOUR OWN *HATE*.

YOU ARE NOT ONE OF US. *LEAVE* US NOW, KOMAND'R.

YOU ARE A *DISGRACE*.

OH, I WILL *LEAVE*, WARLORDS. AND I'LL GO WHERE I WILL BE *APPRECIATED*.

BUT I'LL BE *BACK*. TO SEE YOU ALL BURN IN *HELL!*

"SHE *LEFT*, WE ASSUMED, TO RETURN TO *TAMARAN*."

BUT SHE NEVER WENT *HOME*.

WHAT SHE DID WOULD *PREVENT* HER FROM EVER GOING HOME *AGAIN*.

SHE CERTAINLY DIDN'T *FIT* ON TAMARAN FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD US.

NO. SHE DIDN'T. AND NEVER *WOULD*.

14

"I SAID BEFORE THAT TAMARAN HAD INSTALLED NEW ***DEFENSES*** THE CITADEL COULD NOT BREAK THROUGH. BUT..."

MYAND'R, WHAT *IS* IT?

WARSHIPS! BUT ***HOW?***

"MY FATHER COULDN'T GUESS, BUT ***I*** KNEW. KOMAND'R HAD FLED TO THE ***CITADEL*** AND REVEALED ALL OUR ***SECRETS.*** BECAUSE OF MY SISTER, TAMARAN WOULD BE ***DEFEATED.***

"MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, I ***HATED*** KOMAND'R.

"AND I ***SWORE*** AT MYSELF FOR LETTING HER ***LIVE.***

"BUT I ***ALSO*** SWORE THAT SHOULD WE EVER MEET AGAIN, SHE WOULD SURELY ***DIE.***

"MORE THAN ***FIVE MILLION*** OF OUR PEOPLE DIED IN THAT FIRST ATTACK. MANY ***MORE*** WOULD PERISH IN THE WEEKS TO COME." (15)

IT WAS HORRIBLE. OUR WORLD HAD BEEN SO **LOVELY**, BUT NOW ALL YOU COULD SMELL WAS THE STENCH OF **BURNING** FLESH.

"...A TRUCE THAT DEMANDED A **SACRIFICE.** MY FATHER **REFUSED** IT AT FIRST, BUT THEN REALIZED HE HAD NO OTHER **CHOICE.**

"ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF WARFARE HAD TAKEN ITS **TOLL.** HE HAD TO SUCCUMB OR TAMARAN WOULD BE COMPLETELY **OBLITERATED.**"

MYAND'R, WE HAVE **COME.**

SO **SOON?** I HAD HOPED IT WOULD BE **LONGER.**

FATHER... MOTHER... RYAND'R... I ...I **LOVE** YOU ...I LOVE...

PARADISE WAS **LOST...** BURIED BENEATH THE RUBBLE OF TOO MANY CITADEL RAIDS.

BUT, AT LAST, A **TRUCE** WAS CALLED...

TAKE ONE LAST **LOOK**, CHILD-- SINCE YOU WILL NEVER SEE YOUR FAMILY **AGAIN!**

FOR IF YOU SHOULD **RETURN** TO TAMARAN, THEY AND ALL THEIR PEOPLE WILL BE INSTANTLY **DESTROYED!**

"THE GORDANIANS WERE THE CITADEL'S **SLAVERS.**

"WE ALL HAD HEARD HOW **TERRIBLE** THEY COULD BE."

WELL, WELL--IT HAS BEEN A **WHILE**, HASN'T IT, KORIAND'R?

I DON'T BELIEVE IT-- **YOU?**

WHO **ELSE,** SWEET SISTER?

WHO ELSE WOULD DEMAND THAT **YOU** BE TAKEN CAPTIVE? I HAVE **PLANS** FOR YOU, MY DEAR.

16

"CITADEL SLAVERY WAS *UNLIKE* THE SLAVERY THAT EXISTED ON *YOUR* WORLD.

"WE WERE SOLD FOR *ONE YEAR*. AS LONG AS WE WERE NOT *KILLED*, OUR MASTERS COULD DO *ANYTHING* TO US.

"AT EACH YEAR'S END KOMAND'R WOULD *CLAIM* ME AGAIN. AND I ALWAYS SWORE I'D CLAIM MY *VENGEANCE*.

"I ... CANNOT TELL YOU HOW *TERRIBLE* THOSE SIX YEARS WERE.

"I TRY NOT TO *THINK* ABOUT IT, BUT SOMETIMES AT NIGHT I ... CANNOT *HELP* IT.

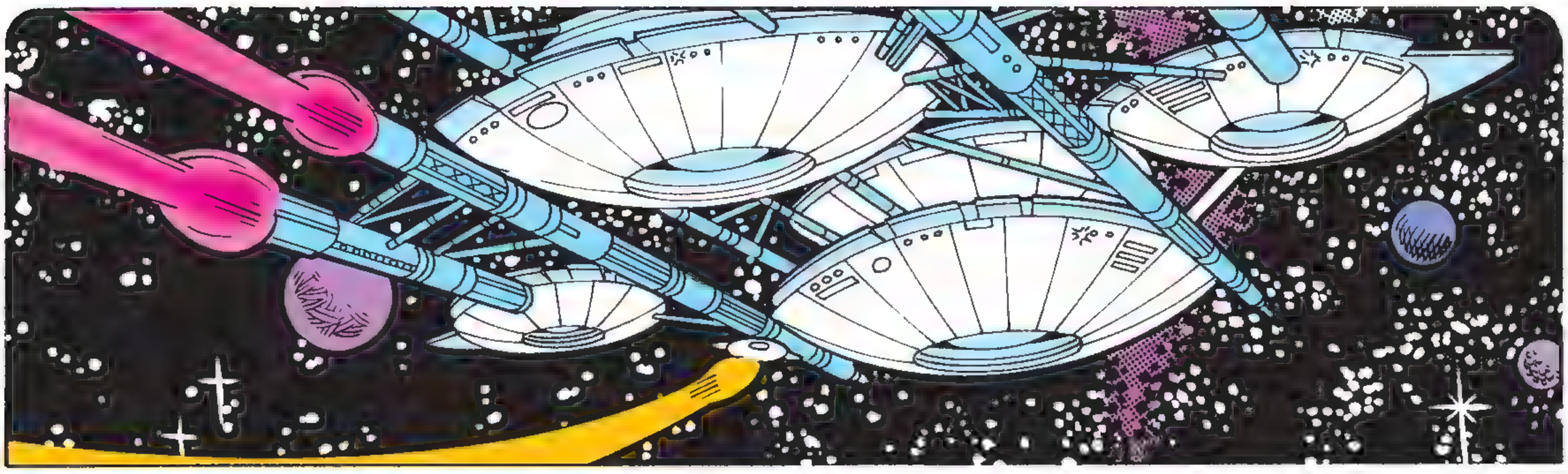
"THE TORTURES AND THE DEGRADATIONS ... THOSE ARE BEST *FORGOTTEN*.

"BUT THERE WERE *MOMENTS*...

"...TIMES WHERE I EXACTED *REVENGE*... THOSE I STILL REMEMBER SO *VIVIDLY*.

"DURING THOSE YEARS I LOST MUCH OF MY *INNOCENCE*; I LEARNED HOW TO *HATE*.

17



"IT WAS HALFWAY THROUGH THE END OF MY FIFTH YEAR WHEN I ***KILLED*** MY LAST MASTER, A WORM WHOSE VERY TOUCH ***SICKENED*** ME. I WAS RETURNED TO THE GORDANIANS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE CITADEL FOR ***TRIAL***.

"AT THIS POINT WHAT ***HAPPENED*** TO ME NO LONGER ***MATTERED***. I HAD SWORN TO NEVER AGAIN GO THROUGH ANOTHER YEAR OF ***SLAVERY***.

HERE SHE ***IS***. I HAD TO ***DRUG*** HER INTO SUBMISSION.

KORIAND'R, WHAT AM I EVER GOING TO ***DO*** WITH YOU?

YOU KILLED YOUR ***MASTER*** AND THAT IS SOMETHING THAT CANNOT BE ***PERMITTED***.

YOU'LL HAVE TO ***DIE***, OF COURSE.

A ***TOAST*** THEN--TO THE ***AFTERLIFE***.

YOU DIE, AND THEN ***TAMARAN*** ITSELF WILL ***FOLLOW***.

YOU'RE ***SCUM!***

BUT I AM ***ALIVE***. THAT IS ALL THAT ***MATTERS***.

"BUT I WAS FATED NOT TO BE ***BROUGHT*** TO THE CITADEL. YOU SEE, THE PLANET I HAD BEEN SENT TO WAS AN ***OUTWORLD POST...***

"...ONE WHICH HAD PERIODICALLY BEEN ATTACKED BY THE ***PSIONS***, THE CITADEL'S DREADED ***ENEMIES***."

"THE PSIONS HAD BEEN AT ***WAR*** WITH THE CITADEL FOR MORE THAN A ***MILLENNIUM***-- BUT JUST BECAUSE THEY ***HATED*** THE CITADEL, DO NOT THINK THEY WERE ANY ***BETTER***. IN FACT, THEY WERE FAR ***WORSE***, FAR ***CRUELER***, IF THAT IS POSSIBLE.

"THOSE OF THE CITADEL WERE ***BARBARIANS***, BUT THE PSIONS WERE ***SCIENTISTS***.

"THEY WOULD STRIP OFF YOUR ***FLESH*** JUST TO SEE HOW ***LONG*** YOU WOULD LIVE.

"THEY ***JUSTIFIED*** ALL THEIR SICKNESS IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE. LIFE MEANT ***NOTHING*** TO THEM. OUTSIDE OF THEMSELVES, EVERYTHING ELSE EXISTED SOLELY FOR THEIR EVIL ***TESTS***."

RESISTANCE? HOW SILLY OF YOU.

SQA, THE GORDANIANS ARE ***WARM-WEATHER*** CREATURES.

OBSERVE THE EFFECTS OF EXTREME ***COLD*** ON THEIR FRAGILE NERVOUS SYSTEMS.

THEIR ***BLOOD VESSELS*** WILL BLOAT AND EXPLODE. THEIR ***HEARTS*** WILL RUPTURE UTTERLY.

THEY WILL EXPERIENCE TERRIBLE ***PAIN*** BEFORE THEIR FLESH CRACKS.

STRANGELY ENOUGH, GORDANIANS WON'T DIE ***IMMEDIATELY***. THEY ***SUFFER*** GREATLY BEFORE DEATH OVERTAKES THEM.

DISSECT THE THING TO DISCOVER ***WHY***. THE ANSWER MIGHT PROVE ***ILLUMINATING***.

19

THEN AGAIN, IT MIGHT *NOT.*

LOOK, THIS ONE STILL *LIVES.* WELL, THAT WILL BE REMEDIED ONCE YOU BEGIN ITS *DISSECTION.*

CURIOUS RACE. AND SO *MINDLESS.*

WELL, LET US SEE WHAT *ELSE* MIGHT BE ON BOARD.

WHO KNOWS, WE MIGHT FIND *OTHER* LIVING CREATURES FIT FOR...

...EXPERIMENTATION.

TAMARAN-IANS? HOW *PERFECT.*

I BELIEVE I HAVE THE VERY EXPERIMENT THESE SUN-WORSHIPPERS MIGHT ACTUALLY *ENJOY...*

...BEFORE THEY *DIE.*

"UNCONSCIOUS, WE WERE STRAPPED INTO THEIR TERRIBLE MACHINES. WHEN I AWOKE I KNEW MY DEATH WAS *AT HAND."*

YOUR RACE HAS AN UNCANNY ABILITY THAT ALLOWS YOU TO CONVERT *SOLAR ENERGY* INTO THE POWER OF *FLIGHT.*

WE WISH TO LEARN THE *EXTENT* OF YOUR ABILITY.

WE WISH TO SEE *HOW MUCH* ENERGY YOU ARE CAPABLE OF CONVERTING.

DO YOUR *WORST*, PSION. IF I LIVE, I WILL *KILL* YOU.

TRUST ME. YOU *WON'T* LIVE.

NOW, *SOME* OF OUR SCIENTISTS THEORIZE YOU CAN CONVERT ONLY *MINIMAL* ENERGY BEFORE YOUR BODIES EXPLODE.

OTHERS PLACE THE LIMIT FAR *HIGHER*.

UNTIL NOW OUR RESEARCH HAS BEEN *THEORETICAL*. WE THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING A MORE *PRACTICAL* INSIGHT.

ALL RIGHT NOW. WE SHALL FOCUS INTO YOU ONE THERMAL UNIT WHICH SHALL BE *INCREASED* EVERY FIFTEEN SECONDS...

I'M SO PLEASED OUR BICKERING HERE WILL FINALLY COME TO AN *END*.

ONE UNIT,..INCREASING,.. TWO...THREE...YOU SHOULD BEGIN FEELING SOME *DISCOMFORT*. PLEASE, FEEL FREE TO CRY OUT IN AGONY.

EMOTIONAL DISPLAYS ARE SUPPOSEDLY *HELPFUL* TO YOU LOWER SPECIES.

I'LL KILL YOU... *I'LL KILL YOU!! I'LL DESTROY ALL OF YOU!!*

ARRGHH!

...UNTIL YOU *EXPLODE*, OF COURSE.

"KOMAND'R WAS THE *FIRST* TO CRY OUT. PERHAPS MY LAST SIX YEARS HAD *INURED* ME TO PAIN."

21

I TOLD YOU, FON, THEY CAN ABSORB A FAR *GREATER* AMOUNT OF ENERGY THAN YOU THOUGHT.

I'LL *WIN* OUR BET.

I SUPPOSE *SO*, TRONT.

ALERT! CITADEL ATTACK SQUAD APPROACHING! ALERT! BATTLE STATIONS! ALERT!

EH?

"KOMAND'R AND I WERE STILL TRAPPED IN THEIR *SOLAR ABSORBER*, THE SUN'S RAYS STILL BLASTING INTO OUR SYSTEM.

"BY NOW I WAS IN PAIN, SCREAMING OUT FOR AN *END* TO THIS TORTURE EVEN AS THE CITADEL'S SHIPS POUNDED AT THE PSIONS.

"SOMETHING MUST HAVE *HAPPENED* DURING THE ATTACK. PERHAPS A FREQUENCY WAS CHANGED. PERHAPS...I DON'T *KNOW*.

"BUT, THE MACHINE WHICH HELD ME SUDDENLY *EXPLODED*.

"I WAS *FREE*. AND I HAD SOMEHOW BEEN *CHANGED*."

MY HANDS ARE GLOWING WITH *POWER*.

WHAT *HAPPENED* TO ME?

"I HEARD THE *SHOUTING* THROUGHOUT THE CORRIDORS, AND THEN I GAZED UPWARDS...

"...AND SAW *KOMAND'R* WAS STILL BEING *HELD*."

"I WANTED TO *LEAVE* HER THERE UNTIL SHE *EXPLODED*... I REALLY WANTED HER TO *DIE*.

"BUT, I COULDN'T *DO* THAT.

"...KOMAND'R WAS STILL MY *SISTER*.

"EVEN IF SHE WAS MY *ENEMY*, EVEN IF I HAD BEEN TAUGHT TO *KILL* MY FOES...

SKREE

"WHATEVER HAPPENED WOULD *HAPPEN*, I FELT.

"SOMEHOW I WAS ABLE TO SENSE THE POWER WITHIN ME... THE FACT THAT I HAD BECOME A LIVING *SOLAR BATTERY*.

"I *CONCENTRATED* FOR A MOMENT, FOCUSED MY POWER, AND KOMAND'R WAS *FREE*.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SISTER? *SPEAK* TO ME.

SPEAK TO YOU? IMBECILE! I'LL *KILL* YOU!

I HAVE THE *SAME* POWER YOU HAVE-- BUT EVEN MORE *INTENSIFIED!*

KORIAND'R, HOW MANY TIMES MUST YOU BE REMINDED TO *SLAY* YOUR ENEMY--

--NOT *PITY* THEM.

23

SHE HAD TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF MY MISPLACED *COMPASSION.*

SHE TAUGHT ME THE *FOLLY* OF COMPASSION.

DURING THE CONFUSION SHE BROUGHT ME TO A CITADEL SHIP WHERE SHE WAS REASSIGNED TO THE CITADEL *HOMEWORLD.*

HER *VICIOUSNESS* IN BATTLE HAD AWARDED HER A HIGHER *RANK...*

...WHICH LEFT US *SEPARATED.*

"I WAS PLACED IN AN *ENERGY-DAMPER* WHICH NULLIFIED MY EXCESS POWER AND I WAS TAKEN ABOARD THE STAR-SLAVESHIP Q'ST'R BOUND FOR THE *PRISON PLANET.*

TROGAAR SAYS YOU WILL *DIE,* GIRL.

A SHAME. I WOULD *ENJOY* SOMETHING LIKE YOU.

OH?

YOU STILL *CAN,* GORDANIAN.

COME ON...

...NOBODY NEEDS TO *KNOW.*

OKAY, GIRL, *COME* TO ME.

DOLT!

KRE

OUT OF MY *WAY,* SLAVER.

I DON'T NEED *INTERFERENCE* NOW--WHEN I'M SO CLOSE TO *ESCAPING.*

"I SNEAKED ABOARD A *STAR-SLIDER* AND TOOK OFF TO PARTS UNKNOWN."

24

IT TOOK THREE MONTHS TO REACH THE EARTH, AND EVEN THOSE MONTHS WERE FILLED WITH TROUBLES...

BUT, THROUGH IT ALL, I ONLY WANTED MY SISTER BEFORE ME SO THAT I COULD *DESTROY* HER.

HEY, KORY, PLEASE... YOU'RE AMONG *FRIENDS*... YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET ANGRY. YOU CAN *RELAX.*

I *KNOW* THAT, DICK.

BUT SOMETIMES... IT'S SO HARD TO *FORGET.*

HEY, GUYS, THIS IS OUR LAST DAY HERE, SO I THOUGHT WE'D *CELEBRATE.*

CHAMPAGNE? I DON'T REALLY *DRINK*, BUT THIS IS A SPECIAL OCCASION.

I GOT SOME *PERRIER* FOR YOU, RAVEN.

THANK YOU, WALLACE.

AND SOME *COCA COLA* FOR THE WALKING, TALKING SALAD.

YOU *ARE* ONLY 16.

DON'T *REMIND* ME, RUST-POT.

WE SPEND SO MUCH *TIME* TOGETHER, BUT USUALLY WE'RE GOING AFTER THE BAD GUYS. ALWAYS *FIGHTING.*

WELL, WE'VE HAD TIME TO BE WITH EACH OTHER AS REAL PEOPLE, AND YOU KNOW--

--I REALLY *LIKE* ALL OF YOU SO MUCH.

AS *FRIENDS.*

TO FRIENDS...

...AND TO FRIENDSHIP!

LONG MAY IT LAST!

THE END

25

DC COMICS™

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

VOLUME FOUR



MARV WOLFMAN

GEORGE PEREZ

RUMEO TANGHAL

FREE! NIGHT FORCE PREVUE PULL-OUT!

ALL NEW!

NO. 21
JULY

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

EXTRA! INTRODUCING THE NIGHT FORCE BY WOLFMAN AND COLAN IN A SPECIAL FREE 16-PAGE COMIC!



AN INSTANT COLLECTOR'S ITEM-- FROM THE NEW DC!



BEWARE THE WRATH OF... BROTHER BLOOD!

THEY'RE WRONG, YOU KNOW. THE CALL BASEBALL THE GREAT AMERICAN PASTIME.

PERHAPS LONG AGO IN A MORE INNOCENT AGE, IT WAS-- BUT NO LONGER.

AMERICA'S NEWEST PASTIME, INDEED. THE PASTIME FOR MOST OF THE WORLD TODAY IS A FAR MORE BRUTAL GAME IN WHICH THERE ARE NO WINNERS.

THE NAME OF THE GAME IS -- TERRORISM!

ITS PLAYERS TODAY ARE SEVERAL UNKNOWNS AND TWO SOMEWHAT-KNOWNS NAMED STARFIRE AND RAVEN OF--

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

HURRY, STARFIRE. WE MUST FIND THE BOMB HIDDEN HERE.

WE CAN AFFORD NO FURTHER DELAY.

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ
WRITER-CO-CREATORS-ARTIST

ROMEO TANGHAL
EMBELLISHER

BEN ODA
LETTERER

ADRIENNE ROY
COLORIST

LEN WEIN
EDITOR

BUT, RAVEN, WE HAVE TO FIND OUT *WHERE* IT'S HIDDEN.

DO *YOU* KNOW WHERE IT IS? SPEAK QUICKLY, MAN--THE *BOMB*... WHERE *IS* IT?

BOMB? WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT, LADY?

I DON'T *KNOW* ABOUT ANY BOMB. I DON'T EVEN KNOW *YOU!*

WULL, *AH* DO, STERN. THIS LI'L LADY'S FROM THEM *TITAN* KIDS. *SPARROW,* AH THINK HER NAME IS.

AN' THIS HERE ONE'S *STARFLAME,* AH THINK.

PLEASE, YOU DON'T COMPREHEND THE *URGENCY.*

WE HAD REPORTS OF A *BOMB* PLANTED HERE.

THERE ARE THOUSANDS WHO MIGHT BE *KILLED.*

NOT *REALLY,* LADY. WE WERE JUST WAITIN' FOR *YOU* TO SHOW.

NOW TO GIVE THE GUY PAYIN' THE BILLS A *SHOW* FOR HIS MONEY.

HE WANTS YOU TWO RUN THROUGH *YOUR PACES.*

AND THAT'S WHAT HE'S GOING TO *GET!*

HOLD! I SENSE--

--IMPENDING *VIOLENCE!*

FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MOMENTS SHE WILL TRAVERSE DIMENSIONS AS EASILY AS YOU CAN STUMBLE ACROSS A STREET...

RAVEN? *RAVEN?* WHERE ARE--

THE MISTRESS OF MYSTICISM VANISHES IN SILENCE.

OH.

OKAY.

I DON'T NEED *ROBIN* TO TELL ME THOSE ARE OUR *BOMB-PLANTERS* AND THAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR A *FIGHT.*

I THINK I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO *ACCOMMODATE* THEM!

BAM

BAM

BAM

BUT...

NO! STARFIRE, PLEASE, NO *VIOLENCE.*

ALREADY TOO MANY INNOCENTS ARE BEING *TRAMPLED* IN THEIR MAD EFFORTS TO *ESCAPE.*

THAT IS SOMETHING PEOPLE LIKE YOU NEVER *CONSIDER,* DO YOU?

YOU THRIVE AND WALLOW IN *DESTRUCTION* FOR ITS OWN SAKE.

YOU *SICKEN* ME!

THIS IS RAVEN'S SOUL-SELF. ITS PROPERTIES ARE UNKNOWN.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY ITS POWERS ARE EXTENSIVE, AND IN LESS MORAL HANDS THEY COULD PROVE QUITE...

... DEADLY!

THE GAME IS *OVER!* NOW *TALK!*

UNLIKE RAVEN, I DO NOT *PACIFY* MY ENEMIES!

BUT EVEN AS STARFIRE'S DESTRUCTIVE STARBOLTS LASH OUT...

...RAVEN'S MORE CORPOREAL SELF GETS TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER AT HAND...

YOU! THE ONE BEHIND THIS INSANITY --*TURN* NOW, MAN!

HUH? HOW'D YOU SNEAK UP *BEHIND* ME?

3

I AM NOT HERE TO ANSWER *YOUR* QUESTIONS. I HAVE QUERIES OF MY OWN.

I DEMAND *INFORMATION*...

WH-WHAT'RE YOU *DOIN'* TO ME?

EXTRACTING KNOWLEDGE... TELL ME WHERE YOU PLACED THE *BOMB*.

TELL ME *NOW!*

NOW!

STARFIRE! IT IS BURIED BENEATH SOMETHING CALLED *THIRD BASE*.

WHAT'S *THAT*?

OVER *THERE*, LADY-- THAT LITTLE *BAG* ON THE FIELD.

THIS IS *IT*? THEN STAND BACK.

THERE IS NO TIME REMAINING!

RAVEN, I THINK I *SEE* IT. BURIED ABOUT FIVE FEET DOWN!

IT'S QUITE *SMALL* ACTUALLY.

ALTHOUGH I LEARNED LONG BEFORE I EVER FOUND MYSELF ON *YOUR* WORLD--

--THAT SIZE IS NO INDICATION OF *POWER*!

LIKE A GRIM COMET, PRINCESS KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN BURNS THROUGH THE BLUE SKIES OF EARTH...

WHY DOESN'T SHE *THROW* IT?

SHE IS STILL MUCH TOO *LOW!*

BEFORE WE RUSHED OFF HERE, DICK WARNED ME TO MAKE CERTAIN THE BOMB WAS FAR AWAY FROM *MANHATTAN*...

...OR ELSE ITS *SHOCK-WAVE* COULD STILL WREAK *HAVOC.*

DICK'S ALWAYS PROVEN *RIGHT* ABOUT THESE THINGS BEFORE...

IT'S JUST MATTERS OF A MORE *PERSONAL* NATURE THAT HE'S USUALLY *WRONG* ABOUT.

WHY WON'T HE ADMIT THAT HE *LOVES* ME? I KNOW HE *DOES.*

THOUGH I WONDER IF *I* CAN EVER CARE FOR HIM AGAIN THE WAY I DID BEFORE I MET *FRANKLIN.*

WILL I BE ABLE TO CARE FOR *ANYTHING* EVER--

X'HAL! TOO CLOSE!

THE BOMB EXPLODED *SOONER* THAN I HAD EXPECTED.

C-CAN'T *CONCENTRATE* ...CAN'T *FLY*...

GREAT AZAR! *KORIAND'R*...

I *WILL* NOT... I *CANNOT* LET HER DOWN.

SHE'S BARELY CONSCIOUS... SHE *NEEDS* ME.

WE'RE SO *DIFFERENT,* THE TWO OF US... YET SHE HAS ALWAYS CALLED ME HER *FRIEND*...

5

THE FALLING ALIEN VANISHES WITHIN RAVEN'S MYSTICAL SOUL-SELF...

...ONLY TO REAPPEAR MOMENTS LATER...

ARE YOU SAFE?

SHE DOESN'T MOVE.

CURSE ME FOR A FOOL! SHE USES THE WARM SOLAR RAYS TO GIVE HER POWER...

THE SUDDENNESS OF BEING ENVELOPED BY MY FRIGID SOUL-SELF THREW HER INTO DEEP SHOCK.

HER FRIEND MAY HAVE ENDANGERED HER, BUT THE EMPATH THAT I AM CAN SAVE HER...

LET HER PAIN BECOME MY OWN ... LET HER AGONIES BECOME MINE.

I MUST SAVE KORIAND'R ...I MUST SAVE ... ... MY FRIEND.

SPACE: THERE ARE SEVERAL HUNDRED SATELLITES IN CLUTTERED ORBIT AROUND THE EARTH THESE DAYS...

...THIS IS BUT ONE OF THEM:

FASCINATING! THE EXTENT OF THEIR POWER IS GREATER THAN I HAD IMAGINED!

SUCH INFORMATION WILL PROVE VALUABLE TO MY CLIENTS.

WHO IS THIS MYSTERY MAN? THAT IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY...

FOR NOW, HOWEVER, WE RETURN TO EARTH...

...TO A WOODED ACREAGE NEAR BUZZARD'S BAY, MASSACHUSETTS...

...WHERE A POSSIBLY FAMILIAR FIGURE RACES FOR HER VERY LIFE.

HER NAME IS MARCY (NO LAST NAMES ARE PERMITTED IN THE RETREAT)...

SHE DEARLY WISHES HE WAS WITH HER NOW.

OH, MY GOD... MY GOD! THEY'LL KILL ME!

ZWIPPP!

ONCE, MANY YEARS AGO, SHE WAS THE GIRL FRIEND OF VICTOR STONE, WHO HAS SINCE BECOME CYBORG, ONE OF THE NEW TITANS...

ZWIPPP PPP!

ALL THESE MONTHS I'VE BEEN *SO WRONG!* I JUST WANT TO *LEAVE*... THAT'S ALL... THAT'S *ALL.*

I WON'T *SAY* ANYTHING. I WON'T *TELL* ANYBODY!

CHUGCHUGCHUGCHUGCHUGCHUG

BELIEVE ME, HIS SECRET IS *SAFE*... REALLY IT IS.

JUST LET ME GO HOME TO MY PARENTS. *PLEASE*...

THE ANSWER COMES COLDLY AND RELENTLESSLY...

CHUGCHUGCHUGCHUGCHUG

ZWIPPPPPPPP

WHY...WHY? *WHY?*

WHY?

CHUGCHUGCHUGCH

BECAUSE YOU HAVE *SINNED,* SISTER MARCY.

CHUGCHUGCHUG

SINNED AGAINST THE CHURCH OF *BROTHER BLOOD!*

FOR SINNING YOU MUST PAY *PENANCE.*

CHUGCHUG

YOUR PENANCE IS *EXCOMMUNICATION.*

WHAT?

CHUGCHU

EYAAGGHHH HHH!!!

7

SEVERAL HOURS LATER IN MANHATTAN...

...I'M TELLIN' YA, SARAH, IT'S JUST HARD TO *EXPLAIN*.

I FEEL *GUILTY* BECAUSE KNOWIN' ME GOT YOU *KIDNAPPED!*

BUT I DON'T *BLAME* YOU, VICTOR. I *NEVER* DID.

I BLAME *MYSELF*. THAT'S ENOUGH.

SOMETIMES I EVEN *BLAME* MY-SELF FOR MY *PARENTS* DYIN'.

MEBBE IF I HAD HELPED THEM LIKE THEY *WANTED* ME TO, WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM *WOULDN'T* HAVE HAPPENED. I DON'T KNOW...

MAYBE I JUST DON'T WANT TO GET TOO *CLOSE* TO ANYONE.

HELL, SARAH, I DON'T HAVE *MYSELF* FIGURED OUT...

NOBODY *EVER* KNOWS THEMSELVES. VICTOR, I'M NOT ASKING FOR US TO BE ANYTHING OTHER THAN *GOOD FRIENDS*...

...BUT I WAS SO *WORRIED* WHEN YOU DIDN'T CALL. I--

RRING RRING

THAT'S *NOT* ME CALLIN', JUST IN CASE YOU WERE *WONDERIN'*.

HOLD ON, I'LL MAKE THIS *FAST*.

VIC STONE HERE. WHAT'S YOUR *GRIPE*?

VIC? THANK HEAVEN I GOT *THROUGH*.

IT'S *MARCY*... PLEASE, I NEED *HELP*, VICTOR.

THEY'RE *AFTER* ME, VICTOR.

P-PLEASE *HELP* ME.

THEY? WHO'S *THEY*, MARCY? AN' WHERE ARE *YOU*?

B-BROTHER BLOOD. VIC-- HE'S TRYING TO *KILL* ME.

I-I'M AT *RON'S* OLD PLACE... PLEASE *COME* HERE ...*PLEASE*...

I'M ALREADY *HURT*...

SKR-A-BLAM

AGGHHH!

MARCY!?! FOR GOD'S SAKE! *MARCY!*

PLEASE, I'LL COME BACK *QUIETLY*. I WON'T EVER *RUN AWAY* AGAIN.

JUST DON'T *HURT* ME.

PLEASE DON'T HURT ME.

OUR SISTER WAS *SLAIN* TRYING TO GIVE YOU PENANCE, SISTER MARCY.

WE CAN DELAY THE LAST RITES *NO LONGER*.

YOU MAY SAY YOUR *FINAL PRAYERS* BEFORE WE CARRY OUT BROTHER BLOOD'S ORDER OF *EXCOMMUNI-CATION*.

MARCY! *MARCY!* *MARCY!*

MMMM

WHY?

WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY?

SOMEWHERE IN MASSACHUSETTS...

IT WASN'T *MY* FAULT. IT WASN'T *MY FAULT!*

THIS IS *SISTER KARYN.*

SHE WAS THE ONE.

BUT IT WASN'T *MY* FAULT.

I'VE BEEN *LOYAL* TO YOU FOR THREE YEARS NOW.

I *WORSHIP* YOU. I'VE GIVEN YOU *EVERYTHING!*

I WOULD NEVER *BETRAY* YOU.

I AGREE, SISTER KARYN. YOU HAVE GIVEN ME EVERYTHING YOU *HAD* TO GIVE.

BUT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO *VOUCHED* FOR OUR LATE SISTER *MARCY*.

YOU WERE ASSIGNED TO EXPLORE HER *HISTORY*.

AND YOU *FAILED* TO LEARN THAT SHE HAD ONCE BEEN THE *LOVER* OF ONE OF OUR POSSIBLE *ENEMIES*.

BUT THEY WERE *KIDS*. IT WAS OVER *YEARS* AGO.

FIRST LOVES DO NOT *DIE*, SISTER KARYN. YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN *BETTER*.

I TOLERATE *MISTAKES*, SISTER KARYN. BUT IN CONFESSION YOU *CLAIMED IGNORANCE* OF THE TRUE FACTS.

DELIBERATE *LIES* ARE GROUNDS FOR *EXCOMMUNICATION*.

A POWERFUL FINGER CASUALLY PRESSES A BUTTON...

...AND INSTANTS LATER A SECTION OF STONE FLOORING SLIDES OPEN...

WH-WHAT?

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO *DO* TO ME?

YAGGHHH!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME?!?

ENOUGH.

PERHAPS *THIS* SHALL SERVE AS A LESSON TO THE *OTHERS* IN OUR MIDST WHO DO NOT TRULY BELIEVE IN--

--THE MERCY OF BROTHER BLOOD!

BUT *NOW,* BECAUSE OF SISTER KARYN'S *BLUNDERING,* WE HAVE POSSIBLY SPAWNED A NEW *ENEMY.*

ALERT OUR BELIEVERS IN THE *SENATE* AND *CONGRESS* OF THIS COUNTRY TO QUICKLY *DEAL* WITH THESE *TEEN TITANS* FOR ME.

I HAVE FAR MORE *IMPORTANT* DUTIES THAT MUST BE ATTENDED TO THAN THE UNFORTUNATE *FATE* SOON TO BEFALL THOSE SEVEN YOUNG *CHILDREN.*

12

TITANS' TOWER:

HEADQUARTERS FOR THE NEW TEEN TITANS SITUATED ON A SMALL ISLAND IN NEW YORK'S EAST RIVER...

...LAST THING SHE SAID WAS SOMETHING ABOUT A BROTHER BLOOD BEING AFTER HER.

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW SORRY WE ARE, VICTOR.

BUT I PROMISE WE'LL START A COMPUTER CHECK ON THIS BROTHER BLOOD IMMEDIATELY.

HOW ARE YOU HOLDING ON? YOU OKAY?

I'LL BE FINE... JUST FINE. LOOK, I GOT SOME THINGS TO DO.

JUST GET ME THAT INFO, OKAY?

IT'S AS GOOD AS GOTTEN, VIC.

ROBIN, LET ME SPEAK TO VICTOR, PLEASE.

VICTOR, IT'S ME, KORIAND'R. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?

ANYTHING AT ALL? I'D LIKE TO HELP.

DON'T NEED NO HELP, GOLDIE. BUT THANKS FOR ASKIN'.

JUST MAKE SURE ROBBIE GETS ME THAT STUFF, OKAY?

THEY'LL FIND OUT WHERE THIS BROTHER BLOOD IS.

THEN HE'S MINE!

MINE!

13

HE'S TAKING IT VERY *HARD.*

LISSEN, I *KNOW* THAT LUNKHEAD BETTER'N *ANYONE.* HE'S KEEPIN' MOST OF HIS ANGER *INSIDE.*

I'M REALLY SCARED OF WHAT'LL *HAPPEN* WHEN IT BURSTS FREE.

YOU THINK MARCY WAS *KILLED* BECAUSE SHE KNEW *VICTOR?*

IS THIS THE WAY THINGS *ARE* ON YOUR WORLD?

YOU FALL IN LOVE AND YOUR LOVER HAS TO *DIE?*

BELIEVE ME, KORY, IT'S NOT *ALWAYS* THAT WAY.

SURE, THERE ARE SOME *SICK PEOPLE* OUT THERE. BUT *MOST* OF THE WORLD BELIEVES IN *LIFE* AND BASIC *HONESTY.*

WE'RE IN THE *MAJORITY,* THE *VAST* MAJORITY. BUT ALL YOU NEED IS A FEW CRUMBS LIKE THIS *BROTHER BLOOD...*

LISTEN, FOR *VICTOR--*

--LET'S *NAIL* THAT CREEP-- *FAST!*

A DAY PASSES AS WE MOVE TO A CEMETERY ON THE SOUTH SHORE OF QUEENS, NEW YORK.

HOW DO YOU SIMPLY SUM UP THE LIFE OF A GIRL FAR TOO YOUNG TO DIE?

HOW DO YOU MAKE SENSE OF SOMETHING DEVOID OF SENSE?

SADLY, THERE IS NO WAY. INSTEAD, YOU JOIN TOGETHER IN GRIEF AND TRY TO THINK OF THE GOOD TIMES...

...THE TIMES OF SMILES AND LAUGHTER AND LOVE...

14

BUT, ALL TOO OFTEN, THERE ARE TOO MANY SAD **REMINDERS**...

YOU?!?

I *HAD* TO COME, MR. REYNOLDS.

MARCY MEANT A *LOT* TO ME.

ROBERT DUMONT

ABRAHAM BROWN

YOU...YOU *FILTH!* YOU *KILLED* HER!

DAD, PLEASE... REMEMBER YOUR *HEART.*

DONALD, STOP... *STOP IT!*

I *DIDN'T* KILL HER, MR. REYNOLDS. SHE CALLED ME FOR *HELP*...

...AND I REALLY *TRIED* TO HELP...

BECAUSE OF YOU SHE *DIED*. WHY DIDN'T *YOU* DIE SO SHE WOULDN'T HAVE *HAD* TO?

PLEASE, DONALD, VICTOR HAD NOTHING TO *DO* WITH IT. YOU *KNOW* THAT.

HE *CARED* FOR HER AND SHE *LOVED* HIM.

YOUR WIFE IS *RIGHT*, MR. REYNOLDS.

WHAT ARE *YOU* DOIN' HERE?

WE'RE YOUR *FRIENDS*, VICTOR.

MR. REYNOLDS, VICTOR *LOVED* YOUR DAUGHTER. HE COULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO *HURT* HER.

HE DROVE HER TO THAT *MANIAC*, THAT'S WHAT HE DID.

HE'S *RESPONSIBLE* FOR ALL OF THIS.

MR. AND MRS. REYNOLDS, I FEEL YOUR GRIEF AND *SORROW*...

...I CAN *SENSE* YOUR PAIN AND LOSS AND NOTHING I CAN SAY CAN OR EVEN *SHOULD* REMOVE IT.

CERTAINLY NOTHING COULD EVER BRING MARCY *BACK*...

...BUT WE WANT TO HELP FIND HER *KILLER*. WILL YOU HELP US *DO* THAT... FOR *MARCY*?

AS WE HAVE STATED, RAVEN IS AN EMPATH, AND HER CALM, WARMING WORDS SOOTHE THE ANGER IN DONALD REYNOLDS' HEART...

15

WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE SOMEONE NAMED *BROTHER BLOOD* WAS RESPONSIBLE.

BLOOD...? LOOK, VICTOR, I'M SORRY I *SNAPPED* AT YOU. PLEASE *UNDERSTAND.*

"I DO," VICTOR RESPONDS.

PLEASE, CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING *ABOUT* BROTHER BLOOD?

I DON'T KNOW *MUCH.* MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE CHECKED HIM OUT WHEN THIS ALL *BEGAN.*

MR. REYNOLDS, DO NOT DWELL ON THE *PAST.* THAT ACCOMPLISHES NO POSSIBLE *GOOD.*

W-WHEN I BROKE UP THE ROMANCE BE-TWEEN MARCY AND VICTOR, SHE BECAME SO SILENT, SO *SULLEN.*

ONE OF HER FRIENDS TOLD HER ABOUT THIS RELIGIOUS GROUP -- *THE CHURCH OF BROTHER BLOOD.*

OH, I *ARGUED* WITH HER, BUT SHE STILL BECAME A *BELIEVER...*

...FINALLY SHE *LEFT* OUR HOUSE AND MOVED TO BLOOD'S *RETREAT.* SHE CALLED US A FEW *DAYS* AGO...

...SAID SHE WANTED TO COME *HOME.* BUT THAT'S THE *LAST* WE HEARD FROM HER UNTIL THE *POLICE* CAME.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE BLOOD'S RETREAT *IS,* MR. REYNOLDS?

YEAH, I KNOW... I *KNOW* WHERE THAT DAMNED HOUSE OF DEATH IS.

EVENING...

RICHARD, VICTOR WAS *ANGRY.*

NOTHING I COULD *DO* ABOUT IT, RAVEN.

HE COULDN'T *JOIN* US.

HOLD!

OH, IT'S *YOU,* BELCHER. ANOTHER *DELIVERY?*

YEAH. GOT ME SOME PEACH FUZZ RIPE FER *PICKIN'!*

PEACH FUZZ? WAS THAT AN *INSULT?*

I THINK THEY MEAN WE'RE *YOUNG.*

AT LEAST I *HOPE* THAT'S WHAT THEY MEANT.

ANYWAY, WE *MADE* IT.

BROTHER BLOOD'S *RETREAT,* FOR WORSE OR *WORSER STILL.*

WELCOME, *WELCOME* TO THE CHURCH OF BROTHER BLOOD.

PLEASE, STEP DOWN AND FOLLOW US FOR *PROCESSING.*

GREAT! WE'RE NOT PEOPLE, WE'RE *CHEESE!*

16

UPON FIRST VIEW, BLOOD'S RETREAT IS AWESOME. BUT THEN ITS DECADENT SPLENDOR BECOMES APPARENT...

GROTESQUE GARGOYLES LEER DOWN ON EVERY HALLWAY, THEIR STONY EYES SEEM TO FOLLOW YOUR EVERY STEP...

THE SMELL OF INCENSE IS ALMOST OVER-WHELMING AS IS THE CONSTANT DRONING OF EBON-CLAD WORSHIPPERS...

THESE ARE SOME OF OUR OTHER BELIEVERS ON THEIR WAY TO DARK MASS.

YOU'LL JOIN THEM SOON ENOUGH.

I SENSE VIRTUALLY NO EMOTIONS FROM THOSE PEOPLE. IT IS AS IF THEIR SENSES HAVE BEEN DEADENED.

KEEP SCANNING, RAVEN. TRY TO HOME IN ON BLOOD HIMSELF.

WE'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT BROTHER BLOOD. IS HE REALLY A GOD LIKE THEY SAY?

HE'S BEEN ALIVE FOR MORE THAN 700 YEARS...

...AND HIS CHURCH HAS PROSPERED FOR AT LEAST THAT LONG ON THE BALTIC ISLAND OF ZANDIA.

WHEN DO WE GET A CHANCE TO SEE HIM?

SOON. VERY SOON.

17

MAYBE **TOO** SOON, WALLY WEST, FOR DEEP **BELOW** THE GIANT CATHEDRAL...

I'VE GOT THE NEW RECRUITS UNDER *BI-SECTORS*.

BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE AN *ANOMALY* HERE.

GET A COMPUTER READOUT OVER TO *MOTHER MAYHEM*-- FAST.

WHAT HAVE WE *FOUND*, ACOLYTE?

A DEFINITE *BIOLOGICAL ANOMALY* IN THREE OF THE FOUR NEW RECRUITS...

WELL, WE'VE BEEN *EXPECTING* SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

BROTHER BLOOD MUST BE *NOTIFIED* AT ONCE.

MAN, THIS PLACE IS CREEPIER THAN A *JOHN CARPENTER MOVIE*.

THAT IT *IS*, WALLY, BUT WHAT *BOTHERS* ME IS HOW HE MANAGED TO GET SO MANY *KIDS* HERE--

--WITHOUT SOMEONE *FINDING OUT* ABOUT IT?

AND DID YOU SEE THOSE SUPPOSED *NUNS*? NOT ONE OF THEM WEARS A *CRUCIFIX*.

WHATEVER THIS IS, IT'S NOT A REAL *RELIGION*.

Y'KNOW WHAT *HURTS*? SOMETHING TWISTED LIKE THIS *THRIVES* WHILE MANY REAL RELIGIONS ARE IN *TROUBLE*.

ARE YOU *RELIGIOUS*, WALLY?

I *GUESS* SO. I DON'T *GO* ALL THE TIME, BUT I BELIEVE. *YOU*?

I HAVEN'T *THOUGHT* ABOUT IT MUCH.

18

SOMETHING *WRONG?*

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE WORN *PANTS.*

I DON'T FEEL AT ALL *COMFORTABLE.*

AND I FEEL EVEN *LESS* AT EASE WHENEVER I LOOK AT THAT *PICTURE.*

THERE IS SOMETHING *EVIL* ABOUT IT, DONNA.

BROTHER BLOOD

JUST THEN...

YOU ARE DRESSED. *GOOD.* IT IS TIME FOR THE *CEREMONY.*

COME WITH *ME.*

EACH NIGHT THERE ARE *PRAYERS.* EVERYONE JOINS IN.

YOU ARE ON *PROBATION* HERE FOR SIX MONTHS. IF YOU *PASS,* YOU BECOME A FULL MEMBER OF THE CHURCH.

NOW, TAKE THESE SEATS AND REMAIN *SILENT* UNLESS SPOKEN TO BY BROTHER BLOOD.

DO YOU *UNDERSTAND?*

STRANGE. SHE'S NOT TRYING TO MAKE THIS *PLEASANT.* HOW DOES SHE EXPECT TO GET *RECRUITS?*

19

LOOK AT THEM-- EVERYONE'S ACTING LIKE *PUPPETS.*

SHHH. LOOK AT THE *ALTAR.*

EVERYONE NOW RISE AND PRAY WITH *BROTHER BLOOD.*

NO, SISTER. NOT *YET.*

THERE ARE *SOME* AMONG US WHO HAVE NO *RIGHT* TO PRAY IN OUR MIDST.

WE HAVE *SINNERS* HERE.

LOOK INTO YOUR DAMNED SOULS AND YOU WILL *KNOW* WHO YOU ARE.

YOU WILL SEE THE *HELL* YOUR SOUL HAS BEEN CONDEMNED TO.

YOUR ONLY SALVATION IS COMPLETE *OBSEQUIOUSNESS* TO THE DEMANDS OF YOUR GOD, BROTHER BLOOD.

WILLIAM LORING-- RISE AND CONFESS YOUR *SINS.*

BR-BROTHER BLOOD, I-I WAS *WRONG.* I WANTED TO GO HOME TO MY PARENTS.

WILL YOU PAY *PENANCE?*

I WILL... I *WILL.* I'LL DO *ANYTHING.*

GOOD, WILLIAM. FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS YOUR LABORS HERE SHALL BE IN-CREASED *TWOFOLD.* NOW SIT.

WENDY FLETCHER-- RISE AND CONFESS YOUR *SINS.*

I *HAVEN'T* SINNED.

I FINALLY SAW THE *TRUTH.*

AND YOU ARE A *BLASPHEMER!*

YOU'RE NOT A *GOD.* YOU'RE NOT EVEN A *RELIGION.* YOU'RE A DEVIL-- *A DEVIL!*

20

ONE WHOSE SINS DEMAND IMMEDIATE *EXCOMMUNICATION!*

ZWIP

SKRAKK

ARGHH! THE PAIN... THE TERRIBLE, PIERCING *PAIN!*

THERE, MY TRUE BELIEVERS-- *THAT* ONE, SHE AND HER FRIENDS...

...THEY HAVE COME HERE TO *DESTROY* THE CHURCH OF BROTHER BLOOD.

BUT WE SHALL SHOW THEM WHAT *HAPPENS* TO WOULD-BE DEFILERS! *TEAR THEM APART!*

DICK, THEY'RE *ATTACKING* US!

OUR COVER'S OBVIOUSLY *BLOWN!*

TRY TO GET TO *BLOOD.*

AND REMEMBER, THESE KIDS ARE JUST BEING *DUPED!*

I *KNOW* IT, DICK--

--BUT I CAN'T DO ANYTHING *ABOUT* IT!

DUPED OR NOT, I'VE GOT TO FIGHT BACK TO GET *FREE.*

BUT ONCE FREE, MY NEXT STOP IS *BROTHER BLOOD* HIMSELF!

I'LL TRUSS 'IM UP LIKE A *TURKEY* BEFORE HE CAN EVEN *TURN!*

21

AH, THE YOUNG *FLASH*. ASIDE FROM YOUR AMAZING *SPEED* YOU ARE STILL QUITE *HUMAN*.

YOU'LL PROVE NO *PROBLEM*.

I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE'S JUST STANDING THERE *WAITING*.

BETTER BE *CAREFUL*. HE'S *UP* TO SOMETHING.

A VALIANT ATTEMPT, THOUGH A *FRUITLESS* ONE. THE ELECTRICAL FIELD THAT SURROUNDS ME WILL ASSURE YOUR *DEFEAT*...

ARGHH!

...AND MY ULTIMATE *VICTORY!*

AMAZING. HIS REFLEXES ARE *ASTOUNDING*.

HE PULLED AWAY QUICKLY ENOUGH TO AVOID *ELECTROCUTION!*

STILL, HE IS NO *THREAT*.

YOU'VE *WON!*

OF COURSE.

BROTHER BLOOD--

--THE FEMALE IS *VANISHING!*

SHE'S BRINGING THE *OTHER* TITANS HERE, BLOOD.

WHAP!

WHICH MEANS YOU AND THIS PSEUDO-RELIGIOUS MADHOUSE ARE *DONE FOR*.

SPAK!

ROBIN-- *DUCK!*

I'M THE ONE WHO PLAYS "BULLETS AND BRACELETS"-- NOT *YOU!*

DON'T *WORRY*, WONDER GIRL, I'M NOT HOGGING YOUR ACT.

RAVEN?

I COULD NOT LEAVE YOU THREE *IMPERILED* LIKE THIS.

THERE IS STILL MUCH HERE I CAN *DO!*

22

THOUGH I HAD NOT INTENDED TO REVEAL MY *PRESENCE* IN YOUR COUNTRY, *SO BE IT!* THE DEED IS *DONE!*

MY FOLLOWERS ALREADY INFEST YOUR *GOVERNMENT!*

I HAVE *BELIEVERS* IN YOUR UNIVERSITIES AND IN YOUR BUSINESS BOARDROOMS.

MY POWER EXTENDS THROUGH THE VERY FABRIC OF YOUR LIVES, INDEED, VERY SOON I SHALL *CONTROL* YOUR LIVES.

CONVERT NOW AND BE SPARED AN IGNOBLE *DEFEAT.*

STUFF IT, BLOOD!

YOU'RE *FINISHED!*

NO, MY YOUNG FOOL, YOU ARE GREATLY *MISTAKEN...*

YOU DO NOT KNOW *WHAT* YOU ARE UP AGAINST.

BUDDY, I'VE HEARD THAT FROM EVERY TWO-BIT CREEP WHO EVER CRAWLED OUT OF THE MUD-HOLE THAT *SPAWNS* YOU TWISTED MADMEN!

AND YOU *KNOW* SOMETHING, BLOOD? YOU'RE ALL *LOSERS!*

HISTRIONICS ILL *BECOME* YOU, CHILD.

I SAID BEFORE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE *POWER* OF BROTHER BLOOD.

KRAK!

BELIEVE ME, THAT IS NO IDLE *BOAST!*

ZWAMM

ROBIN!

YOU HAVE SEEN THE *POWER* OF OUR GOD, NOW SING HIS *PRAISES.*

MISTER, I'M NOT GIVEN TO MAKING RASH PROMISES, BUT I DO PROMISE *THIS--*

--IF *ROBIN'S* DEAD, SO ARE *YOU!*

AND I ASSUME YOU HAVE THE POWER TO *ASSURE* THAT?

DO NOT MAKE ME *LAUGH,* GIRL!

ZWAM

23

I WASN'T *JOKING*, BLOOD. I *MEANT* IT!

THO K

THE *CHILD* SPEAKS LIKE THE *PARENT*...

...YET STILL REMAINS NOTHING *MORE* THAN THE CHILD.

ZZ WA PP!

WONDER GIRL-- ROBIN IS STILL *ALIVE!* HE WAS MERELY *STUNNED*.

A *TEMPORARY* MEASURE, GIRL. *BELIEVE* THAT.

BRING THE CLOAKED ONE TO ME-- *NOW!*

BUT NO MAN CAN *TOUCH* THE GIRL NAMED RAVEN IF SHE DOESN'T *WISH* TO BE TOUCHED...

SH-SHE'S *GONE!*

I WILL WORRY ABOUT *THAT* ONE ANOTHER TIME.

BUT *YOU*-- YOUR STAMINA IS *REMARKABLE!*

STILL, IN THE LONG RUN--

--IT WILL *HELP* YOU VERY LITTLE!

THU NK!

WHY ARE YOU *DOING* THIS, BLOOD?

I DO NOT OWE YOU *EXPLANATIONS*.

YET THIS I *WILL* TELL YOU, GIRL.

THE DESTINY OF BROTHER BLOOD IS TO *CONTROL*.

THIS DAY I STAND READY AT THE THRESHOLD OF DESTINY'S *DOORWAY*.

AND NO MAN, WOMAN OR WITCH SHALL DARE BAR *MY* WAY.

IT IS JUST HIM AND ME... I COULD *FIGHT*--

24

"BUT WHY...

"...DO I SENSE--

"--I WILL LOSE?"

"THERE ARE TOO MANY TO STRUGGLE THROUGH.

"I HAVE TO LEAVE--AND GET THE OTHERS...

"BRING THEM BACK BEFORE--"

ZWIPPP!

TOO LATE, GIRL. I HAVE WON MY *FIRST ROUND!*

JUST AS I SHALL WIN THE *REST* OF MY HOLY CRUSADE!

YOU ARE SUPPOSEDLY *HEROES,* YET YOU FELL WITH HARDLY ANY *EFFORT* ON MY PART.

YOU ARE ALL *DISAPPOINTMENTS!*

BUT, YOU SERVED *SOME* GOOD, I SUPPOSE. MY FOLLOWERS SAW THE AWESOME *POWERS* THAT ARE AT MY COMMAND.

THEY WILL REVEL AT MY SIDE AND PRATTLE ON OF MY *GREATNESS...*

...WHEN ALL I DID WAS BE TRUE TO MY *DESTINY.*

ALL IN ALL, I SUPPOSE, THIS HAS BEEN QUITE A *GOOD DAY.*

BUT...

MY *BODY* IS UNCONSCIOUS, BUT MY SOUL IS *READY...*

I KNOW WHAT MUST BE *DONE!*

THE OTHER TITANS MUST BE *ALERTED.* THEY MUST BE *BROUGHT* HERE...

...BUT FOR *WHAT?* THEIR *TRIUMPH--* OR THEIR *DOOMS?*

NEXT: **THE BATTLE!** *COVER-TO-COVER SHOCKS!*

NO. 22
AUG.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

CALL HIM... BROTHER BLOOD!

PÉREZ
tanghal

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

ASHES TO ASHES!

I HAVE MET THE *ENEMY* AND THEY ARE *MINE!*

THEY LIE HUMBLED AND DEFEATED AT MY FEET, SUBJECT TO MY EVERY *WHIM!*

MOTHER MAYHEM--SEAL THEM IN THE PITS AND LET THEM *DIE!*

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ
WRITER-CO-CREATORS--ARTIST
ROMEO TANGHAL
EMBELLISHER
BEN ODA — *LETTERER*
ADRIENNE ROY — *COLORIST*
LEN WEIN — *EDITOR*

PLEASE NOTE, GENTLE READER, THAT THIS MAN IS NAMED BROTHER BLOOD!

HE IS NOT VERY NICE!

WAIT! DO NOT TAKE ALL OF THEM...

...LEAVE ME THE NON-POWERED ONE -- THE BOY CALLED ROBIN!

I WANT THE CONFESSOR TO SPEAK, WITH HIM!

HE POSSESSES INFORMATION THAT MIGHT BE OF IMPORTANCE TO ME.

ONCE YOU ARE DONE, HURRY BACK HERE.

THAT GIRL -- RAVEN -- HER SHADOW-FORM FLED OUR CATHEDRAL TO ALERT HER BRETHREN.

WE CAN EXPECT THEM TO FOLLOW HER BACK HERE AT ANY TIME.

NOW, YOUNG CHILD --IT IS TIME TO DEAL WITH YOU.

BROTHER BLOOD--?

SENATOR HARDY SAYS THERE IS AN EMERGENCY. HE HAS TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

HARDY? OH YES, MY ACOLYTE IN WASHINGTON.

I WILL TAKE HIS MESSAGE.

MY BELIEVERS, WE ARE ON THE ROAD TO VICTORY!

THE CHURCH OF BROTHER BLOOD WILL PROSPER!

AND THE WORLD WILL BE OURS!

THE OTHERS RAISE THEIR VOICES IN PRAISE OF THEIR GOD AND MASTER, BUT BROTHER BLOOD BARELY HEARS THEM...

LONG AGO HE LEARNED TO IGNORE THE MEWLINGS OF HIS MINDLESS MINIONS...

I AM NOT PLEASED THAT MY PRESENCE IN THIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN DETECTED...

...YET, I FEEL I SHALL TURN THIS TRAGEDY INTO TRIUMPH.

IT WILL BE SO, BROTHER BLOOD. THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN FAIL.

2

BROTHER BLOOD, THE MOTION TO RECOGNIZE *ZANDIA* AND YOUR CHURCH AS A TRUE ORGANIZED RELIGION IS COMING TO A *VOTE* TOMORROW.

OUR FOLLOWERS IN BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE ARE HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME *CONVINCING* THE OTHERS.

WE NEED *HELP.*

I HAVE SUPPLIED YOU WITH *MILLIONS.* HAVE YOU SQUANDERED THEM AWAY?

N-NO... IT'S JUST THAT SINCE *ABSCAM* THINGS HAVE BEEN *TOUCHY.* IT ISN'T AS *EASY* TO OFFER BRIBES.

HMMM.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO *REPORT,* HARDY?

LISTEN TO ME, HARDY. TELL YOUR FELLOW SENATORS THAT SINCE THE ZANDIAN PRESIDENT WAS *ASSASSINATED* SEVERAL WEEKS BACK--*

--OUR *NEW* PRESIDENT PROMISES TO INSURE *DEMOCRACY* IN ZANDIA.

AND BE CERTAIN YOU DO NOT WASTE MY *TIME.*

MY CHURCH HAS ALREADY GROWN THROUGHOUT *EUROPE.* YET I NEED *AMERICA* IF MY PLANS ARE TO *SUCCEED.*

SISTER LUCILLE, CALL OUR REPRÉ-SENTATIVE IN THE *MEDIA.* ARRANGE FOR AN *INTERVIEW* WITH ME-- *TONIGHT.*

HARDY, PERHAPS I CAN *ALLAY* THE FEARS OF YOUR COMPATRIOTS.

TELL THEM ANY *LIE* THEY WILL BELIEVE.

*TITANS #14. --Len

3

BROTHER BLOOD LEAVES AND ARROGANTLY STRIDES THROUGH HIS GREAT CATHEDRAL.

PAINTINGS WORTH MILLIONS ADORN HIS WALLS, BUT THE BROOD-ING PATRIARCH PAYS LITTLE ATTENTION TO THEM.

MATERIAL SPLENDOR MEANS NOTHING TO HIM.

BROTHER BLOOD MERELY CRAVES POWER.

BROTHER RAYMOND, HOW IS THE YOUNG TITAN TAKING HIS CONFESSIONAL?

HE HAS NOT YET SCREAMED OUT IN PAIN, BROTHER BLOOD.

HMM. THAT WILL HAVE TO CHANGE.

CONFESSOR, WHY HASN'T OUR GUEST ADMITTED TO HIS SINS?

HE WILL. HIS BRAVADO WILL FADE LONG BEFORE HIS FLESH IS SEARED FROM HIS BONES!

HE WILL CONFESS TO EVERYTHING!

I GUARANTEE IT.!

4

PERHAPS A WORD OF *ADVICE* MIGHT HELP, BOY. I SUGGEST YOU *TELL* THE CONFESSOR WHAT HE WANTS TO *KNOW*.

HIS METHODS ARE MOST... *INDELICATE*.

AND THE *DAMAGE* HE CREATES... *PERMANENT*.

BLOOD, YOU'RE NOT THE HEAD OF SOME *RELIGION* LIKE YOU CLAIM--YOU'RE JUST A BLASTED *KILLER*.

AND NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO TO *ME*, I'LL SEE YOU *PAY* FOR YOUR CRIMES.

AN AMUSING *SPEECH*, BOY. I SEE I MUST FIRST BREAK YOUR *SPIRIT* BEFORE I LOOSEN YOUR *TONGUE*!

ROBIN BREATHES DEEPLY AS THE ***ELECTRONIC LASH*** *WHIPS ACROSS HIS NAKED CHEST...*

WHILE, ON AN ISLAND IN NEW YORK'S ***EAST RIVER...***

I'VE *HAD IT!*

YOU *HEAR* ME? I'M FED UP *WAITING!*

BROTHER BLOOD KILLED *MARCY*-- THE FIRST GIRL I EVER *LOVED*...

... KILLED HER JUST BECAUSE SHE KNEW *ME*.

SO WHY ARE THE *OTHERS* GOIN' AFTER BLOOD? WHY AM *I* STAYIN' BACK HERE PRESSIN' THESE BLASTED ***TWO-TON WEIGHTS?***

VIC, *CALM* ***DOWN,*** FOR PETE'S SAKE.

YOU KNOW *WE* COULDN'T GO TO BLOOD'S RETREAT... ONLY THE *OTHERS* COULD INFILTRATE.

FACE IT, PAL-- WE'D BE PRETTY *CONSPICUOUS!*

I DON'T *CARE*, LOGAN!

I'M *SICK* OF COOLING MY HEELS!

SKRAK

I'M SICK OF *EVERYTHING!*

5

YOU OKAY?

MARCY WAS *MY* GIRL AND I SHOULD BE *DOING* SOMETHING ABOUT HER *DEATH*...

SOMETHIN' MORE'N *WAITIN'* BACK HERE AND GETTIN' *MADDER* EVERY SECOND.

NOW YOU KNOW HOW *I* FELT WHEN *FRANKLIN* WAS KILLED.

I *TELL* YOU, VICTOR, ALL WE DO IS SIT HERE *TALKING*--

--WHILE MORE GOOD PEOPLE *DIE!*

FOR ONCE, KORIAND'R-- YOU AN' I *AGREE.*

C'MON, VIC, JUST *THINK* ABOUT IT FOR A MINUTE.

WE AGREED WITH DICK TO *WAIT* HERE WHILE THE OTHERS DID THEIR WORK.

DICK *ALWAYS* DOES THINGS THAT WAY... ALWAYS SO *SLOWLY.*

THAT ISN'T *MY* WAY, GARFIELD.

I DON'T THINK IT'S *VICTOR'S* EITHER.

BELIEVE IT, GOLDIE. LET'S YOU AN' ME *GO!*

NO!

I WON'T *LET* YOU!

VIC, PLEASE *LISTEN* TO ME. YOU'RE NOT *THINKING*...

I WON'T LET YOU MAKE A *MISTAKE.*

YOU'RE GONNA *STOP* ME, GREENIE?

FRANKLY, PAL, I DON'T THINK YOU'RE *MAN* ENOUGH.!

MEBBE YOU CAN HOLD BACK SOME *LITTLE KID*, BUT YOU AIN'T STOPPIN' *ME!*

WHAT IS *GOING ON* HERE?

RAVEN? WHAT IN BLAZES ARE *YOU* DOIN' HERE?

I CAME BACK-- WE NEED *HELP!*

BLOOD *CAPTURED* THE OTHERS, EVEN BLASTED MY *HUMAN BODY.*

I BARELY HAD TIME TO FREE MY *SOUL-SELF.*

THEY *NEED* US.

THEY *ALWAYS* NEED US.

VIC--LET ME GO...FOR PITY'S SAKE, LET ME GO.

6

THE PAIN IS... EXCRUCIATING. FAR WORSE THAN ANY HE HAS SUFFERED THROUGH BEFORE...

YET...

TALK, BOY! SPEAK BEFORE YOUR MUCH-VAUNTED *MIND* IS REDUCED TO LITTLE MORE THAN *MUSH!*

NO!

THE HUMAN BODY CAN ONLY WITHSTAND SO MUCH *AGONY,* BOY.

ONCE YOU HAVE PASSED THE *THRESHOLD,* YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM WILL *COLLAPSE.*

ASSUMING YOU EVEN *LIVE,* YOU WILL BE LITTLE MORE THAN A *VEGETABLE!*

SAVE YOURSELF, BOY--CONFESS ALL *YOU KNOW!*

HE WILL NOT *TALK,* CONFESSOR.

HIS *STAMINA* FAR EXCEEDS HIS *REASON.*

N...

N...

CONFESS! CONFESS!

NOOOOOO!!!

I AM *SORRY,* BROTHER BLOOD. I *FAILED* YOU.

7

YOU DID YOUR *BEST*, CONFESSOR.

BROTHER MORRIS AND SIMON, FOLLOW ME WITH THE *SINNER*.

HIS INFORMATION WOULD HAVE PROVED *HELPFUL*, BUT IT WAS NOT *VITAL* TO MY OPERATION HERE.

I DO NOT *NEED* HIM ANY LONGER.

LET HIM *DIE*!

UNHHHH...

FALLING... INTO SOME AWFUL *PIT*.

I'LL BREAK MY *BACK* IF I LAND LIKE THIS.

OH, GOD, IT *HURTS* SO TO BEND...

FAREWELL, BOY. ENJOY YOUR *FINAL MOMENTS*.

BROTHER SIMON, *SEAL* THE PIT.

THERE'S STILL *LIGHT* IN HERE. HE WANTS ME TO *SEE*--

OH, NO-- KID FLASH, WONDER GIRL-- EVEN *RAVEN*. HE'S GOT THEM *ALL* HERE.

ALL *UNCONSCIOUS*.

THEN HE HEARS ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY GRIND OPEN, AND...

NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!!

...BUT I HAVE NO OTHER *CHOICE*.

SPLOOSH!

THAT'S WHY THE LIGHTS ARE STILL *ON* DOWN HERE--BLOOD WANTS ME TO *SEE* THAT HIDEOUS *MONSTROSITY!*

CURSE HIM. HE'S *SICK*, EVEN MORE TWISTED THAN *THE JOKER!*

HE EXPECTS ME TO *PANIC*, BUT THAT ISN'T HOW I WAS *TAUGHT*.

THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY OUT OF *EVERY* TRAP!

JUST HAVE TO LOOK FOR THE *LOOPHOLE*.

OF COURSE, FIRST I HAVE TO *LIVE* LONG ENOUGH TO DO THE LOOKING.

TROUBLE IS, ARE THE *OTHERS* STILL ALIVE? I DON'T KNOW.

BLASTED *STINGERS!* ALMOST *GOT ME!*

AGHHH! ITS LEG MOVED *FASTER* THAN I THOUGHT!

SHOULDER'S *KILLING* ME-- BUT I DON'T THINK I'VE BROKEN ANY *BONES*.

DONNA'S BREATHING... *THAT* MUCH I CAN TELL, THANK GOD.

BUT NOW THAT UGLY'S HEADING RIGHT *FOR* HER.

WELL, THE OTHERS WILL JUST HAVE TO *WAIT*.

ONE THING AT A TIME. LORD, I HOPE THEY'RE STILL *ALIVE*.

THESE PAST MONTHS HAVE BROUGHT US SO *CLOSE*...

NO! CAN'T WEAKEN MY *CONCENTRATION*. THEY'RE ALIVE. THEY *HAVE* TO BE.

SO--FOCUS EVERYTHING INTO THE *PLAN!*

THUK!

DISTRACT THE BEAST FROM *DONNA*... LURE HIM TOWARDS *ME*...

RAGGGHHHH!!

WELL, I SURE *SUCCEEDED!*

NOW *I'M* HIS TARGET!

WALLY WAS SO *STILL*... DIDN'T SEE HIS *CHEST* MOVING.

NO! HAVE TO CLEAR MY THOUGHTS... *CONCENTRATE,* BLAST IT-- JUST *CONCENTRATE!*

STAY ALIVE... *THINK!* THERE'S A WAY *OUT.*

CAN I SCALE THE *WALLS?*

SOME SORT OF *PIPE* CIRCLES THIS PIT, BUT IT'S ABOUT TWENTY FEET STRAIGHT UP.

TOO HIGH TO *JUMP!*

SPIDER'S TURNING BACK TOWARD *DONNA.*

AND IT'S BLOCKING MY WAY TO HER *SIDE!*

WELL, IF I CAN'T GO *AROUND* TALL, DARK AND GRUESOME--

--PERHAPS I CAN GO *OVER* HIM INSTEAD!

FLIP OFF HIS ABDOMEN AND SOMERSAULT RIGHT OVER TO *DONNA.*

YEAH, I WAS *RIGHT*... SHE *IS* STILL *BREATHING.*

THAT MEANS THE *OTHER* TWO ARE PROBABLY ALIVE AS WELL.

THOUGH IF I DON'T MOVE *QUICKLY* ENOUGH, THEY MAY *NOT* BE FOR MUCH LONGER.

THANK HEAVEN FOR DONNA'S *GOLDEN LASSO.*

IT JUST MAY SAVE *ALL* OUR SKINS!

10

MEANWHILE...

LOOK, PAL, I DON'T WANT WHAT *HAPPENED* BACK THERE TO GET *BETWEEN* US, UNDERSTAND?

I'M *SORRY* ABOUT WHAT I SAID.

BUT IT WAS *TRUE*, ANYWAY.

I TURN INTO *ANIMALS*. GREAT! *BIG DEAL!*

I KNOW I *FOUL UP*--

DON'T *GIVE* ME THAT GARBAGE, GAR. *YOU* DON'T FOUL UP ANY MORE'N THE *REST* OF US.

ANYONE HERE FOULS UP, IT'S *ME* AN' MY BIG MOUTH!

I WAS *ANGRY*. I JUST WANTED TO *CRUSH* SOMETHING. YOU GOT IN MY WAY, THAT'S ALL.

I WOULD'A SAID THE SAME THING ABOUT *DICK* OR *DONNA*. I DIDN'T *MEAN* ANY OF IT.

GUYS, WE'RE ALMOST *THERE*. I SEE BLOOD'S *RETREAT*.

BELOW...

THIS IS BETHANY SNOW FOR *WUBC* NEWS. WE HAVE ALL HEARD ABOUT *RELIGIONS* WHICH SUDDENLY SEEM TO SPRING UP OUT OF NOWHERE...

...RELIGIONS THAT HAVE GRABBED THE ATTENTION OF OUR *YOUTH*.

BUT *ONE* SUCH "NEW" RELIGION THAT HAS JUST *RECENTLY* COME TO AMERICA IS ACTUALLY A VERY *OLD* RELIGION.

I AM HERE IN THE *CHURCH OF BROTHER BLOOD*. A CHURCH THAT DATES BACK ALMOST *700 YEARS*.

BROTHER BLOOD, SOME PEOPLE HAVE COMMENTED UPON YOUR *NAME*. THEY SAY IT *FRIGHTENS* THEM...

BETHANY, *BLOOD* IS THE LIFE-FLUID THAT FLOWS WITHIN ALL MANKIND.

BLOOD *GIVES* LIFE, AND I *STAND* FOR LIFE. MY NAME SHOULD NO MORE *FRIGHTEN* PEOPLE THAN MY TRADITIONAL *CEREMONIAL GARB*.

WHAT ABOUT THE ACCUSATION THAT YOUR COUNTRY IS A NATION WHICH HARBORS *TERRORISTS?*

THOSE DAYS ARE *OVER,* BETHANY. OUR FORMER PRESIDENT, WHOM I ALWAYS RESISTED, IS *DEAD.*

OUR *NEW* PRESIDENT WANTS STRONG LINKS WITH WESTERN DEMOCRACY.

WE BELIEVE ONLY IN PEACE, AND I WISH *ZANDIA* TO TAKE ITS PLACE AMONG THE *FREE NATIONS* OF THIS WORLD.

HMMM. THEY'VE COME. *FINALLY.*

I HAVE COME HERE SEEKING *RECOGNITION* FOR OUR COUNTRY AND OUR CHURCH.

YOU GETTING A STRONG *SOUND LEVEL* ON THIS, HANK?

I HAD TO *ADJUST,* MORRIE. THAT BLOOD GUY'S VOICE IS BARELY ABOVE A COARSE *WHISPER.*

BUT HE'S COMING THROUGH *LOUD AN' CLEAR.*

YOU SEE, WE HAVE BEEN *PERSECUTED* BECAUSE OUR BELIEFS ARE *DIFFERENT.*

SOME OF YOUR PEOPLE FEAR US FOR *NO REASON.*

INDEED, WE HAVE REPORTS THAT A VIGILANTE GROUP OF SUPPOSED *SUPER-HEROES* HAS BEEN SENT TO *EXTERMINATE* US.

SURELY, BROTHER BLOOD, THAT SOUNDS LIKE *PARANOIA.* OUR PEOPLE ARE *TOLERANT.*

I WOULD *HOPE* SO, BETHANY, BUT I FEAR MY REPORTS ARE *TRUE.*

AND SHOULD THEY *COME,* WE WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE TO SHOW THEM THE *STRENGTH* OF OUR CONVICTIONS.

THEY SHOULD *BE* HERE AT ANY MOMENT. THREE... TWO...

12

WE'VE BROKEN *THROUGH,* VICTOR.

NOW IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF *FINDING* ROBIN AND THE OTHERS.

BTRAM!

YOU FIND 'EM, GOLDIE--

-- I WANT *BLOOD!*

SKREEEEE

YOU CAN *HAVE* HIM.

CYBORG, *PLEASE*-- WE JUST CAN'T *KILL* EVERYONE.

LOOK AROUND, THEY'RE ALL *KIDS!*

KRASH!

BLOOD *DUPED* THEM, THAT'S ALL.

I'M NOT AFTER *THOSE* JERKS, LOGAN GET THAT THROUGH THAT *SALAD-HEAD* OF YOURS!

KATHAM!

I MAY *SCATTER* 'EM A LITTLE TO TEACH 'EM A *LESSON*--

--BUT, AT LEAST THEY'LL *WAKE UP!*

YOU KIDS, GET *OUT* OF HERE! WE DON'T WANT YOU *HURT.*

SKREEEE

ALL WE WANT IS OUR *FRIENDS!*

SKREEEE

SOMEONE TELL US WHERE THEY *ARE!*

BLOOD AIN'T GONNA HAVE THAT *LUXURY!*

13

DO YOU *SEE*, BETHANY? I *TOLD* YOU THEY WOULD ATTACK MY FOLLOWERS.

WE'RE BEING *PERSECUTED* FOR OUR *BELIEFS!*

THIS IS *AMAZING*. THESE *TEEN TITANS*, THESE SELF-PROCLAIMED *HEROES*--

--HAVE *INVADED* THIS CHURCH, ARE WRECKING *MILLIONS* IN PRIVATE PROPERTY...

...AND SEEM NOT TO *CARE* IF ANY OF THESE INNOCENT CHILDREN ARE *HURT*.

BAM!

BTAM

UNLESS THE TITANS KILL *US* AS WELL, WE WILL CONTINUE TO *BRING* YOU THIS STORY AS IT HAPPENS.

WE'RE BEING *SET UP*. SHE'S DELIBERATELY *LYING*!

SPAK!

THOOM!

DON'T YOU GUYS *SEE* THAT?

BLOOD'S MAKING *US* LOOK LIKE THE *VILLAINS*!

THAT'S *RIDICULOUS*, GAR. WE'RE ONLY TRYING TO RESCUE OUR *FRIENDS*.

BLAM! BAM!

SKREEEEEEEE!

BESIDES, EVERYONE CAN SEE THAT BLOOD SENT THOSE KILLERS TO *STOP* US.

THE VIOLENCE *CONTINUES* AS BROTHER BLOOD DESPERATELY TRIES TO *DEFEND* HIS CHURCH AND BELIEVERS FROM ATTACK.

IS THIS WHAT AMERICA IS *COMING TO*? ARE WE A COUNTRY OF *HOOLIGANS* AND *TERRORISTS*?

SPAMM!

KUNK!

I'VE BEEN *LOOKIN'* FOR YOU, BLOOD.

SO, YOU HAVE *FOUND* ME. NOW WHAT DO YOU *WANT?*

WANNA PAY YOU BACK FOR WHAT YOU DID TO *MARCY!*

WANNA PAY YOU BACK-- *IN KIND!*

SKRAK!

YOU ATTACK ME IN MY OWN *HOME?* THEN I CAN *DEFEND* MYSELF!

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL LEARN WHO ARE THE *VILLAINS* HERE!

SPTANG!

UNNNHH! LOGAN WAS *RIGHT!* BLOOD IS *USIN'* US! AN' BECAUSE 'A *ME*, WE FELL RIGHT INTO HIS *TRAP!*

MEANWHILE...

GOT DONNA SECURED AND THERE'S ENOUGH *LASSO* TO REACH TO *RAVEN.*

MAN, I HOPE HER *SOUL-SELF* GOT FREE...

...BECAUSE I'M BEGINNING TO THINK GETTING *OUT* OF HERE ISN'T GOING TO BE QUITE SO *EASY.*

SHE'S NOT *BREATHING* ...BUT THEN I DON'T KNOW IF SHE *DOES* BREATHE WHEN HER SOUL-SELF IS OUT OF HER *BODY.*

THERE'S *SO MUCH* ABOUT HER WE DON'T KNOW.

IF WE GET OUT OF THIS *ALIVE*, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF AND *TALK!*

15

"IF"? I THINK MY *ALTERNATIVES* ARE RAPIDLY RUNNING OUT.

NO WAY TO CLAMBER BACK UP THAT ROPE *IN TIME.*

I'M *SORRY,* RAVEN... I TRIED MY *BEST.*

BRUCE I'M SORRY I *LET YOU DOWN!*

RICHARD!

WHAT?

RAVEN?

THE *OTHERS* ARE HERE AS WELL.

BUT FIRST I SEE I MUST *SUBDUE* THIS CREATURE AS BEST I CAN.

WHAT THIS EMPATH FEELS IS TERRIBLE, ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE PAIN CUTTING THROUGH THE VERY FABRIC OF HER BEING. BUT...

THE CREATURE WAS IN *AGONY*... BROTHER BLOOD NURTURED ITS APPETITE AND ANGER THROUGH *TORTURE.*

YEAH, THAT SEEMS TO BE HIS *WAY.* NICE GUY...

...PROBABLY A CHARTER MEMBER OF THE "*MARQUIS DE SADE*" FAN CLUB.

YOU *OKAY?*

JUST *WEAK.*

BUT WE CANNOT *GIVE IN* TO WEAKNESS.

OUR FRIENDS NEED OUR *HELP.* WITHOUT THINKING, THEY ARE *JEOPARDIZING* EVERYTHING WE BELIEVE IN.

TRY TO AROUSE *WALLACE* WHILE I OPEN THE PIT DOOR.

16

YOU ARE *BROTHER BLOOD*... THE ONE *BEHIND* THIS MADNESS.

YOU'RE THE PURVEYOR OF PAIN, THE ONE WHO *REVELS* IN THE AGONIES OF *OTHERS*!

A *TITAN*, AND YOU STILL *LIVE*?

BUT I AM COMMITTED TO *STOPPING* YOU...

...TO REVEALING YOUR *TRUE MADNESS* TO ALL WHO CAN *SEE* US.

WE KNOW THE *TRUTH*--

ARRGHH!!

PAIN! TERRIBLE PAIN!

NO, GIRL. ONLY *I* KNOW THE *FULL* TRUTH.

THE TRUTH WHICH PERMITS ME TO STEP *THROUGH* YOUR ALL-ENVELOPING *SOUL*.

DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DID TO THE *WITCH*, BLOOD--BUT HERE YOU'N ME ARE *AWAY* FROM THEM *TV* CAMERAS.

KRASH!

YOU'RE *DOOMED*, BLOOD!

AND YOU ARE *WRONG*, TITAN. HERE I CAN USE MY FULL POWERS *UNFETTERED*.

ZIZZZLEEE!

HERE I CAN BEGIN TO DEMONSTRATE *WHY* BROTHER BLOOD WILL PROVE *SUPREME*.

17

I... HAVE *NEVER* FELT *ANYTHING* LIKE THAT *BEFORE.*

IT WAS AS IF MY *SOUL* HAD BEEN TORN *ASUNDER.*

BLOOD HAS DOWNED *VICTOR*... I--I SHOULD *DO* SOMETHING...

...BUT I HAVEN'T *HALF* THE NECESSARY STRENGTH TO *STOP* HIM.

THERE IS... TERRIBLE *PAIN* IN EVERY STEP I TAKE ...PAIN I AM HELPLESS TO *CURE.*

ALL I *CAN* DO... FREE THE *OTHERS*... USE THESE DIALS TO SLIDE OPEN THE *PIT DOOR*...

AZAR PROTECT ME!??-- WHAT?

BLOOD'S *TURNING*... THIS IS MY *CHANCE.*

GOTTA HIT 'IM WITH EVERYTHING I'VE *GOT!*

WELL, WELL... LOOKS LIKE I *CAME TO* JUST IN TIME.

ROBBIE, YOU AND WONDER GIRL *ALL RIGHT?*

SHE'S *REVIVING,* FLASH. THANKS FOR THE *LIFT.*

X'HAL! HE DIDN'T HEAR ME *COMING!*

THIS TIME I'VE *GOT* YOU, BLOOD!

SKREEE!

18

HE'S NOT *DOWN*, KORY.

YOUR *STARBOLT* DIDN'T STOP HIM, BUT MAYBE A FEW *SUPER-SPEED PUNCHES* WILL DO THE TRICK.

THUD!

KEEP HIM *OFF BALANCE*.

WE'RE TRYING OUR *BEST*.

BUT, FOR SOME REASON, HE WON'T STAY *DOWN*.

SPTOOMM!

I DON'T *UNDERSTAND*! WE'RE HITTING HIM WITH EVERYTHING WE'VE *GOT*!

WHY CAN'T WE *STOP* HIM?

BECAUSE BROTHER BLOOD HAS SURVIVED MORE THAN *SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS*, GIRL!

DO YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU CAN DESTROY AN IMMORTAL?

WHAAMMM!

HE'S *RUNNIN'*!

SOMETHIN' TELLS ME HE'S *NOT* WHAT HE'S PRETENDIN' TO BE.

HE WOULDN'T RUN IF HE WAS *REALLY* IMMORTAL.

DON'T KNOW WHY GOLDIE'S STARBOLTS DIDN'T *STOP* 'IM, BUT IT'S NOT 'CAUSE A' SOME *MAGIC*!

GODS DON'T HAFTA *HIDE*!

SLAMM!

19

CYBORG TOOK OFF AFTER *BLOOD*.

I *WORRY* ABOUT HIM. HE CRAVES *VENGEANCE*.

YOU THINK HE'LL *KILL* BLOOD?

GOD, I *HOPE* NOT!

ROBIN, YOU SUFFER FROM THIS FALSE *MORALITY*. PEOPLE ON YOUR WORLD *KILL* ALL THE TIME.

WHY NOT SIMPLY *RETURN* BLOOD'S VIOLENCE WITH *VIOLENCE*?

SAY, I JUST REALIZED--I HAVEN'T SEEN *GAR*. WHERE *IS* HE?

HMMM. MY QUESTION'S BEEN *ANSWERED*, I THINK.

HELP! GUYS, I NEED *HELP!*

THERE'S *TOO MANY* OF 'EM!

BAM!

GUYS!

WE'RE *COMING*, CHANGELING... *HOLD ON.*

WONDER GIRL, SEE IF YOU CAN STOP *VIC*.

SCRATCH ONE TITANIUM STEEL *WALL!*

SK-R-TH-OOO-M!

SONIC BLASTER RIPPED IT TO SHREDS!

ONLY I'M *TOO LATE*. HE'S HIGHTAILIN' IT *OUTTA* HERE!

BUT THAT PROVES I'M *RIGHT!*

AN IMMORTAL WOULDN'T *RUN!*

SO WHAT'S HIS BLASTED *SECRET?*

20

MEBBE I CAN'T *FLY* LIKE KORY--

--BUT WHEN MY LITTLE *HYDRAULICS* ARE REALLY *PUMPIN'*--

--I CAN CERTAINLY *LEAP* WITH THE BEST OF 'EM.

I'LL WORRY 'BOUT GETTING *DOWN* WHEN I GOTTA-- BUT FIRST THINGS *FIRST*...

...I WANT-- *NO!*

NOT AGAIN, BLOOD! NOT AGAIN!

WITH A SCREAM OF RAGE, VICTOR STONE, CYBORG, PULLS AT THE ALUMINUM REINFORCED WINGS...

...AND, WITH SEEMINGLY NOT A CARE IN THE WORLD, SUDDENLY LEAPS FREE...

SPA-BAMM!

DID YOU *HEAR* THAT?

I--I COULDN'T *STOP* VIC ...HE'S *DONE* IT.

BROTHER BLOOD'S PLANE WENT *DOWN.*

NO ONE COULD HAVE *SURVIVED!*

21

AT LEAST NO ONE *MORTAL.*

BUT, BROTHER BLOOD HAS *DIED BEFORE* AND ALWAYS HAS HE RISEN FROM THE GRAVE.

HIS CAUSE IS NOT *DEAD.*

YOU SAW IT *LIVE*--THESE TEEN TITANS *STALKED* BROTHER BLOOD AND *KILLED* HIM...

...KILLED THIS MAN WHO ONLY MINUTES AGO PREACHED FOR *PEACE* AND *HOPE* FOR ALL MANKIND.

PARDON ME, BETHANY, BUT PLEASE DO NOT *BLAME* THESE CHILDREN. BROTHER BLOOD WOULD HAVE ASKED *FORGIVENESS.*

EVEN FOR HIS *KILLERS.*

OUR LEADER WILL RISE *AGAIN,* AS HE HAS *ALWAYS* DONE.

HE WILL LEAD US INTO A NEW WORLD OF *HOPE.*

BROTHER BLOOD! BROTHER BLOOD! BROTHER BLOOD!

MAN, SHE COULD SELL USED CARS WITH *THREE BROKEN WHEELS!*

BUT SHE'S LYING THROUGH HER CAPPED *TEETH!*

UNFORTUNATELY WE'RE IN A *BAD POSITION.* HOW DO WE *DEFEND* OURSELVES?

AND WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT *VICTOR?*

DURING OUR FIGHTS PEOPLE MAY *DIE*-- BUT THAT WAS COLD-BLOODED *MURDER.*

MURDER? *NO,* ROBIN. I SENSE THERE WAS NO *MURDER* HERE.

AND FURTHERMORE, I SENSE VICTOR *KNEW* WHAT HE WAS DOING.

BLOOD WAS NEVER *ABOARD* THAT PLANE.

BROTHER BLOOD IS STILL ALIVE!

22

THIS IS BETHANY SNOW FOR *WUBS* NEWS. YOU'VE SEEN THE FACTS--*YOU* DECIDE WHAT IS THE TRUTH.

SHE'S DONE A GOOD JOB.

IF *THIS* DOESN'T CONVINCE THOSE AMERICAN POLITICIANS, *NOTHING* COULD.

THEY WILL BE *CONVINCED*. ZANDIA WILL RECEIVE *OFFICIAL RECOGNITION*.

AND MY *CHURCH* WILL BE ACCEPTED INTO THE *AMERICAN MAINSTREAM*.

FURTHERMORE, THE *PUBLICITY* WILL HINDER THOSE CHILDREN. THE TITANS WILL PROVE NO FURTHER *THREAT* TO MY PLANS.

YES, EVERYTHING IS EXCEEDING *EXPECTATIONS!*

I WILL NOT ONLY *SURVIVE*--

I WILL *TRIUMPH!!*

THE SUB DIVES INTO WATERS OF BLUE...

...BLUE AS THE CLEAR SKIES...

...SKIES WHICH SURROUND OUR FRAGILE LITTLE WORLD...

...SUSPENDED IN THE BLACKNESS OF ENDLESS SPACE.

WE ARE BUT ONE WORLD OUT OF BILLIONS...

...ONE WORLD ABOUT TO BE VISITED.

23

THE SLAVE-SHIP TRAK'R, SLIGHTLY BEYOND THE ORBIT OF NEPTUNE...

GORDANIAN, YOU ARE A DAMNED FOOL!

WE'RE MONTHS LATE IN REACHING THE *EARTH*-- ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR *STUPIDITY*!

NOT *MINE*, COMMANDER-- THE *CITADEL COUNCIL* REROUTED US TO THE PRISON PLANET...

...I COULD NOT HELP IT THAT PRIMUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS *ESCAPED* US!

COME TO MY QUARTERS, ZAKREK--*NOW*!

VERY WELL, COMMANDER.

DAMNED HUMAN. SHE KNOWS WE WERE *DAMAGED* IN BATTLE.

SHE WAS THE ONE WHO INSISTED ON *OUR JOINING* THE WAR--DESPITE THE FACT THAT SHE KNOWS SLAVESHIPS ONLY CARRY *LIGHT WEAPONS*.

I AM *HERE*, COMMANDER.

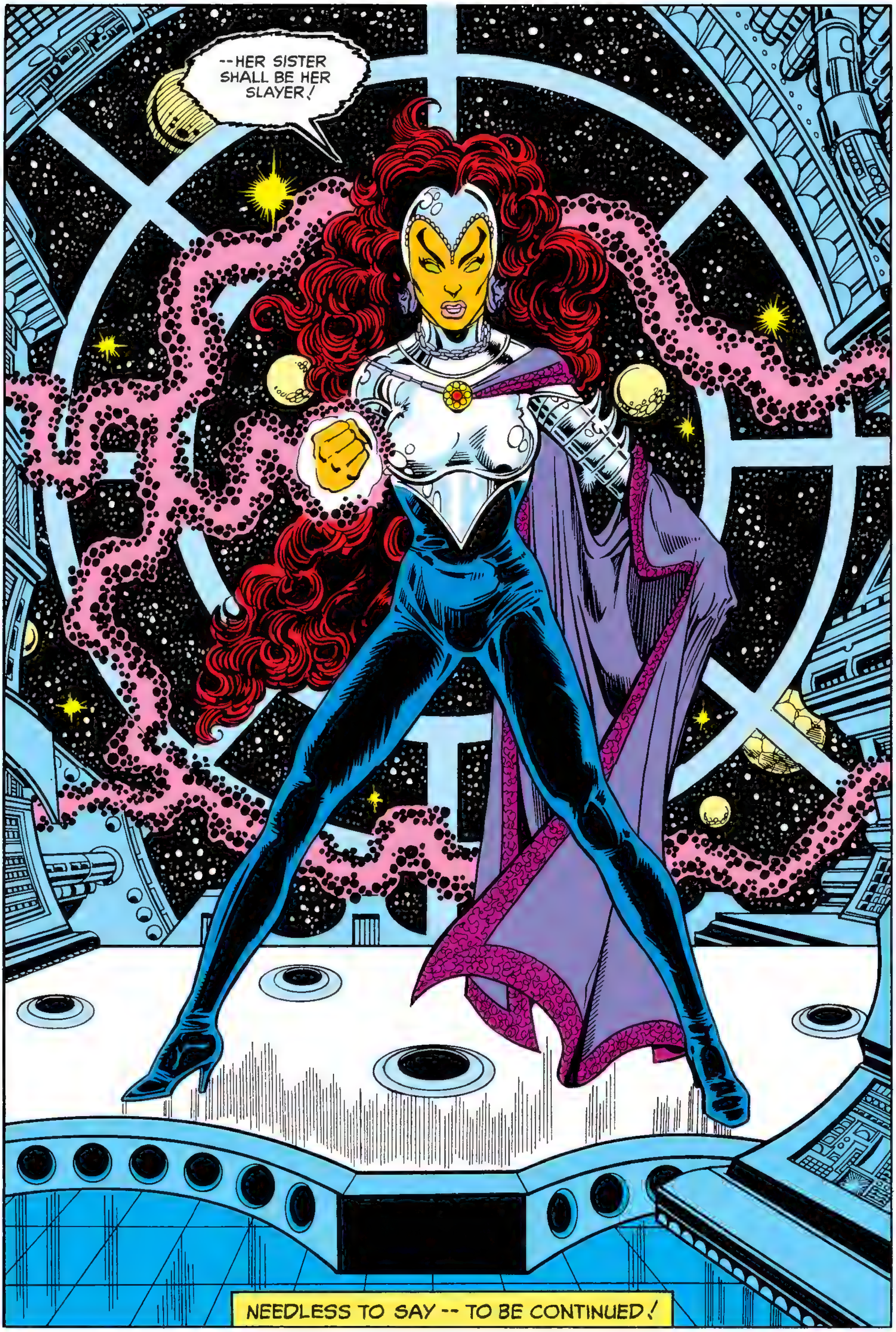
GOOD. ZAKREK. WE HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED TO EARTH BECAUSE THAT PLANET HARBORS ONE OF OUR ESCAPED *SLAVES*.

THE POOR, DELUDED *FOOL*. PRINCESS KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN THOUGHT SHE COULD *ESCAPE* THE CITADEL'S LONG AND DEADLY ARM.

SHE ALWAYS WAS A WIDE-EYED *INNOCENT*. WELL, SHE WILL LEARN WHEN SHE DIES ALONG WITH HER *PROTECTORS*--

--OH, HOW SHE WILL *SUFFER* WHEN SHE LEARNS THAT--

24


--HER SISTER SHALL BE HER SLAYER!
NEEDLESS TO SAY -- TO BE CONTINUED!

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

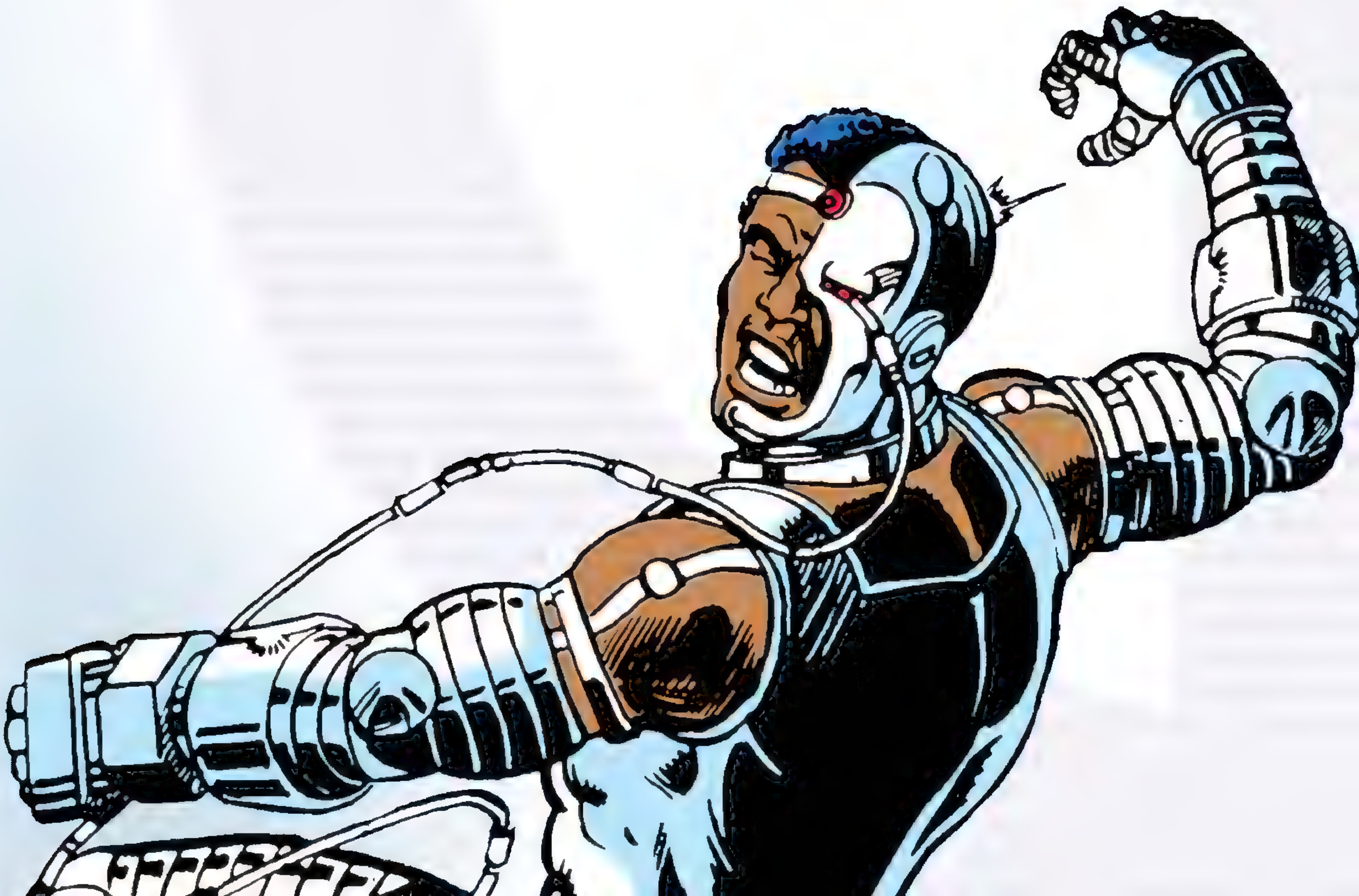
ALL NEW! | NO. 23 SEPT.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

HER NAME IS BLACKFIRE! SHE'S PRINCESS KORIAND'R'S SISTER--

--AND SHE'S CROSSED A UNIVERSE TO DESTROY THE TEEN TITANS!

PEREZ + GIORDANO



THE NEW TEEN TITANS

THE SLAVE-SHIP TRAK'R, SLIGHTLY BEYOND THE ORBIT OF MARS...

ZAREK, WE'RE NEARING *THE EARTH*. GET YOUR GORDANIAN SLAVERS TO THEIR POSTS.

THEY ALREADY *ARE*, COMMANDER.

AND WE'LL *LAUNCH* WHEN YOU GIVE US THE WORD!

KIDNAPPED!

EXCELLENT, ZAREK. THIS PLANET HARBORS ALL TOO MANY OF THE CITADEL'S *ENEMIES*...

... AND THOUGH I CARE *NOTHING* ABOUT PRIMUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS, I WANT *KORIAND'R* OF *TAMARAN* AS MY OWN!

THAT INNOCENT FOOL HAS PLAGUED ME SINCE THE DAY SHE WAS *BORN*. BUT SHE WILL UPSTAGE ME NO LONGER! THAT I SOLEMNLY *SWEAR*.

SHE IS MY *SISTER*, BUT I SHALL *SLAY HER*.

AND THEN SHE WILL KNOW AT LAST THAT *PRINCESS KOMAND'R* CAN NEVER BE STOPPED.

NOW, ZAREK, *LAUNCH* YOUR TROOPS. LAY WASTE TO THAT PLANET. *KILL* WHOMEVER YOU WISH --

-- BUT BRING MY STUPID SISTER TO *ME*. MY DAY OF VENGEANCE IS AT HAND.

2

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ
WRITER -- CO-PLOTTERS -- ARTIST

ROMEO TANGHAL — *EMBELLISHER*
BEN ODA — *LETTERER*
CARL GAFFORD — *COLORIST*
LEN WEIN — *EDITOR*

HEEDLESS OF THE APPROACHING ARMADA, NEW YORK CITY BASKS UNDER A WARM SUMMER SUN...

...THAT IS MOMENTARILY *ECLIPSED* BY A SPEEDING AIRSHIP OF ANOTHER KIND.

SARGE, I DON'T LIKE THIS *NO HOW*.

YOU KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF THEY *TURN* ON US?

YEAH, I *KNOW*, HEYBACK.

BUT THEY AIN'T GONNA DO *NOTHIN'*.

THEY AIN'T EVEN GONNA *BUDGE*.

THEY'RE GONNA SIT THERE, STARIN' AT OUR RIFLES, AN' THINK TWICE BEFORE MAKIN' ANY *MOVE*.

THEN THEY'RE GONNA LOOK DOWN AN' SEE HALF THE NEW YORK POLICE JUST WAITIN' FOR THEM TO *BREATHE FUNNY*.

NAH, THEY AIN'T GONNA DO *NOTHIN'* IF THEY KNOW WHAT'S *GOOD* FOR 'EM.

ALL RIGHT, STEP OUT. I'M *FRANK FITZSIMMONS*, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY.

I PROMISE YOU *SAFE CONDUCT*.

I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT US, MR. FITZSIMMONS. IF WE HAD *WANTED* TO, WE COULD HAVE *DESTROYED* EVERY ONE OF YOUR WEAPONS--

--EVEN *BEFORE* WE HAD LANDED.

WE DON'T WANT ANY OF *YOUR* MEN HURT.

I DON'T LIKE THEM POINTING THEIR *GUNS* AT ME, ROBIN! TELL THEM TO AIM THEM *ELSEWHERE*...

...BEFORE I GET *ANGRY*.

YOU *HEARD* STARFIRE, MR. FITZSIMMONS.

WE'LL GO WHERE YOU *WANT* US TO--

--BUT *NOT* AS YOUR PRISONERS.

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS *WE* DO-- WE DIDN'T KILL *BROTHER BLOOD*.

SO TELL YOUR MEN TO STOP STARING AT US LIKE WE'RE *MURDERERS*... OR EVEN *WORSE*.

DON'T *THREATEN* US, ROBIN. WE'VE GOT A *JOB* TO DO.

FACE IT. YOU WERE SEEN ON *TELEVISION*, SMASHING UP BLOOD'S CHURCH AND GENERALLY CREATING *CHAOS*.

IF WE *DIDN'T* HAUL YOU IN HERE, THE PUBLIC WOULD HAVE OUR *BUTTS* IN A SLING.

ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO. BUT DON'T DARE PUT THOSE *HANDCUFFS* ON ME.

I'LL *NEVER* ALLOW MYSELF TO BE CHAINED UP AGAIN.

THIS IS *BETHANY SNOW* FOR *WUBC* NEWS AT THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY *ADRIAN CHASE*.

THE HELICOPTER BEARING THE TEEN TITANS HAS FINALLY ARRIVED HERE AND THE OFFICIAL *INQUIRY* BEGINS.

BUT THIS REPORTER HAS LEARNED THAT THERE WILL BE A *WHITEWASH* OF THE EVENTS LEADING TO THE INVASION OF BROTHER BLOOD'S CHURCH.

WE PREDICT THESE TEEN TITANS WILL BE *RELEASED*... DESPITE OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE OF THEIR *GUILT*.

THERE! THEY'RE *COMING*. THEY LOOK *MAD*, OUT FOR BLOOD.

LET'S HOPE THEY DON'T ATTACK THE *PRESS* AS THEY DID AN INNOCENT *CHURCH*.

MR. FITZSIMMONS...

IS IT TRUE BROTHER BLOOD *WASN'T* KILLED?

THERE WILL BE *NO COMMENT* UNTIL AFTER D.A. CHASE HAS SPOKEN TO THE TITANS.

WAS BLOOD *BRAINWASHING* KIDS?

AND...

YOU KIDS REALLY *BLEW IT.*

BLOOD HAD EVERYTHING GOING *AGAINST* HIM, AND NOW HE'S MADE *YOU* LOOK LIKE THE VILLAINS.

I THOUGHT YOU KIDS WERE *PROS*. HOW DID YOU GET SO FAR *SCREWING UP* LIKE THIS?

BLOOD WAS TRICKY. HE HAD THE *PRESS* ON HIS SIDE.

THEY *DISTORTED* THE FACTS.

JUST *ONE* MEMBER OF THE PRESS: BETHANY SNOW. SHE'S EVEN A *MEMBER* OF BLOOD'S CHURCH, BUT WE CAN'T *TELL* ANYONE THAT.

IT WOULD *MAKE* IT SEEM LIKE WE'RE OUT TO *GET* HER.

LISTEN, WE KNOW THAT BROTHER BLOOD STAGED HIS "MIRACULOUS" ***RESURREC-TION*** LAST NIGHT...

...TO GAIN *PUBLICITY* AND MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

WE ALSO KNOW BLOOD'S PROBABLY *GUILTY* OF EVERY CRIME FROM MURDER TO NOT CURBING HIS DOG--

--BUT WE CAN'T *PROVE* IT. NOW YOU KIDS MADE IT EVEN *HARDER* FOR US TO DIG OUT THE FACTS.

PROVE IT? MAN, THAT CREEP *OFFED* A GIRL I KNEW. HE KILLED ANOTHER ONE -- RIGHT IN *FRONT'A* US.

AND WE SAW *YOU* ON TV ATTACKING HIM ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

YOUR WORD DOESN'T *HOLD*, MISTER.

BUT SIR, WHAT ABOUT THE ONES WHO *LEFT* HIS CHURCH. WON'T *THEY* TALK?

C'MON, RAVEN, YOU *SAW* THOSE KIDS. THEY *BELIEVED* BLOOD WAS A GOD.

HIS COMIN' BACK TO LIFE AGAIN WILL ONLY *PROVE* THAT POINT.

6

I WANT BLOOD'S *BUTT*. FILTH LIKE HIM TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY BLASTED *LEGAL LOOPHOLE* THEY CAN FIND.

LOOK, THIS FILE IS FILLED WITH *MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED CRIMES* WE SUSPECT HE'S COMMITTED BUT CAN'T PROVE--

--OR CRIMES HE'S *LEGALLY* SQUIRMED HIS WAY FREE FROM.

DO YOU KIDS UNDERSTAND ME? *I WANT HIM NAILED!*

I WANT HIM TO GO ON TRIAL. I WANT HIM TO *PAY*. I WANT HIM TO GET THE *CHAIR*.

BROTHER BLOOD

BUT WHEN PEOPLE LIKE *YOU* FALL INTO HIS TRAP, TURN HIM INTO SOME BLASTED *MARTYR*--

--IT *DESTROYS* EVERY-THING I WORK FOR.

LISTEN, WE TRY TO *COOPERATE*, BUT--

NO BUTS! THERE'S NO *EXCUSE*.

NOW, WE'RE GOING OUT THERE. YOU'RE GOING TO SAY ABSOLUTELY *NOTHING!*

HOLD ON. THE PRESS HAS A RIGHT TO *KNOW*.

I SAID SAY *NOTHING*.

BLOOD MAY HAVE *DROPPED CHARGES* ON YOUR TRESPASSING, BUT I'M CERTAIN *I* COULD FIND *SOME-THING* TO HOLD YOU ON.

AND NOW--LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, *QUESTIONS*, PLEASE.

YES, MISS SNOW. YOU *FIRST*.

I DON'T *LIKE* THIS, GUYS. I DON'T LIKE THIS *AT ALL!*

7

LIKE SILENT SCYTHES, THEY CUT ACROSS THE MANHATTAN SKIES...

SEARCHING... SEARCHING...

SHE'S HERE.

BELOW US.

SALKAS, I FOR ONE WILL BE GLAD WHEN THIS MISSION IS OVER.

I CANNOT STAND THAT SHE-WITCH'S COMPLAINING!

I TELL YOU, I'D SOONER BE DISSECTED BY A PSION THAN SERVE ANOTHER TERM WITH THAT TAMARAN MADWOMAN.

DO WELL, SALKAS, BEGIN THE MENTAL GRAPPLER PROBE -- NOW!

WHILE...

ONE THING BLOOD WASN'T JOKING ABOUT. ACCORDING TO THIS, HE'S BEEN ALIVE FOR MORE THAN 700 YEARS.

YOU BELIEVE THAT, SHORT-PANTS?

I BELIEVE HE'S GOT A GOOD RACKET GOING.

HE COMES FROM ZANDIA, WHICH IS AN ISLAND MANNED BY TERRORISTS. IF HE'S THE HEAD OF THEIR RELIGION--

--HE'S REALLY BAD NEWS--

X'HAL!!

KORY? WHAT'S WRONG?

I--I DON'T KNOW... THERE WAS THIS THING... ALMOST LIKE A SOUND.

I-IT HIT ME AND IT HURT... IT HURT SO MUCH.

...BROTHER BLOOD ISN'T DEAD, MISS SNOW, AND HE'S DROPPED HIS *CHARGES*. SO YES, THE TITANS WILL BE SET FREE.

ARE YOU GOING TO *CONDONE* THOSE SEVEN CHILDREN GOING OUT *VIGILANTE STYLE* TO DESTROY A CHURCH?

THEY'RE *EVIL*. AS DISTRICT ATTORNEY, YOU SHOULD *STOP* THEM.

TRUST ME, MISS SNOW. THE ONES WHO *DESERVE* PUNISHMENT WILL GET IT.

YOU CAN *QUOTE* ME ON THAT.

SKRASSKK

THE TITANS WERE IN THERE, MR. CHASE. IS *THIS* THE WAY YOU MAKE THEM PAY?

WHAT'S *GOING ON?*

WHY DON'T YOU SEND THE *NATIONAL GUARD* IN THERE AND FIND OUT?

ALL RIGHT, COME ON--BUT NO ONE *FIRES*. GOT THAT? *NOBODY USES* THEIR RIFLE.

ROBIN, WHAT'S *GOING ON* HERE?

STARFIRE *FLIPPED OUT!*

SHE WAS IN *PAIN*--

--THEN SUDDENLY WENT *BERSERK!*

WHAT *CAUSED* IT?

I DON'T *KNOW*. BUT, LOOK--THERE SHE *IS!*

AND SHE'S *NOT* IN CONTROL OF HERSELF!

SKRAAKK

HELP ME, PLEASE. I CAN'T *STOP!*

SKREEEEEE SKREEEEE

SOMEONE-- HELP!!

YOU SEE, CHASE, THEY'VE GOT THESE *POWERS* AND THEY CAN'T *CONTROL* THEM.

AND *YOU* CAN'T HIDE IT ANY LONGER. WE'VE GOT ALL THIS ON *FILM*.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL SEE THE *TRUTH*.

WE GOTTA HELP *STARFIRE*...

I'M ALREADY ON MY WAY, VIC.

WHERE *YOU* GO, BEAUTIFUL, *I* GO, TOO.

GOOD. I MIGHT NEED YOUR *HELP*, GAR.

KORY'S POWER COULD PROVE DIFFICULT TO *HANDLE*.

KORIAND'R, CAN YOU *HEAR* ME?

RAVEN, *DO* SOMETHING, WILL YOU?

I-- I CAN'T CONTROL MY *STARBOLTS*!

EVERYTHING *HURTS*!

10

BETHANY SNOW WAS *RIGHT!* THOSE TITANS ARE *DANGEROUS.*

SSK...REEEEEEKKK

LOOK AT WHAT SHE'S *DOIN'!*

HEY, I'VE SEEN HER LAST WEEK AT *YANKEE STADIUM.* SHE RISKED HER OWN *LIFE* TO SAVE US.

SOMETHING'S GOT TO BE *WRONG* WITH HER.

I TELL YOU, THOSE KIDS ARE *GOOD!*

AZAR HELP US ALL. SO *THAT* IS WHAT'S CAUSING KORIAND'R'S MADNESS.

!

WE'VE *BROUGHT* HER TO US.

NOW, LOCK ON THE *MIND DAMPENER!*

THEN SHE WILL BE *OURS!*

AND THEN HER SISTER CAN REND HER LIMB FROM LIMB FOR ALL I CARE!

OUR JOB WILL BE *OVER!*

IT'S THE *GORDANIANS!* THEY'VE COME BACK FOR KORY!

HOOBOY, DONNA, THOSE CREEPS SORTA *OUTPOWER* US!

I RECOGNIZE THOSE *SHIPS*-- FROM OUR FIRST ADVENTURE.

THEY ARE THE *SAME ONES* WHO PURSUED KORIAND'R BEFORE.

AND NOW THEY MUST BE *CONTROLLING* HER.

WE'RE NOT SET UP FOR A DOWN-HOME "STAR WARS!"

11

BUT THEY'RE *NOT* GOING TO GET KORY WITHOUT A *FIGHT.*

REMEMBER, GAR, WE *WON* OUR LAST BATTLE.

YEAH, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE ANY *SKIN* LEFT ON MY TEETH.

SKRAK!

DONNA! WATCH OUT!

NUTS! THAT KERMIT-THE-FROG LOOK-ALIKE *GOT* HER!

WELL, SHE'LL BE *OKAY...*

...MEANWHILE, OCTY OCTOPUS HERE SAYS "*YOU'VE* COMMITTED A DEFINITE NO-NO!"

"OCTY-OCTOPUS"? HMM. WONDER IF I COULD *SELL* THAT TO THE *ZOO CREW?*

I COULD MAKE AT LEAST HALF A BUCK FROM THE *RESIDUALS!*

AND, AS THE SHAPE-CHANGER PUTS THE ARMS ON THE ALIEN SLAYER...

HEY, RED, MOVE THEM FEET AND HELP OUT *WONDER GIRL!*

I GOTTA GET RIDDA SOME EXCESS *GARBAGE!*

I DON'T NEED MY *FEET* TO HELP HER, LOGAN.

REX 'n RAFFY

LOOK! MY *HAND* IS FASTER THAN THE EYE!

AS KID FLASH'S SUPER-SPEED WIND TUNNEL LOWERS THE YOUNG AMAZON TO THE GROUND...

THUMP!

...THE CHANGELING'S ALIEN CHARGE FINDS HIS LANDING NOT QUITE SO PLEASANT.

12

HIS HYDRAULIC LEGS PUMPING, THE MOLYBDENUM STEEL-AND-FLESH TITAN KNOWN AS CYBORG LEAPS HIS WAY ACROSS THE FIERY SKIES...

PUT THAT *WARPER* DOWN, FROG!

I AIN'T FORGOTTEN WHAT IT DID TO ME THE *LAST TIME!**

HOOM!

*TNT #1.--Len.

JUST GOTTA KEEP 'EM OFF MY TAIL WHILE I FIGGER OUT THESE *COMPUTER CONTROLS*...

...WHICH SHOULDN'T TAKE *TOO LONG*.

SKROOOM!

I PLUGGED INTA THEIR *MASTER COMPUTER* BACK WHEN WE FIRST BATTLED, AND *MOST* OF THAT INFO'S STILL STORED IN MY MINI-COMPUTER.

YEAH, SOMETIMES BEING A STEEL FRANKENSTEIN AIN'T *TOO BAD*.

AS LONG AS YOU DON'T LOOK AT *MIRRORS*, THAT IS.

CALL OFF YOUR FORCES, EARTHLING. RESISTANCE IS *FUTILE*.

OUR ORDERS ARE TO *DESTROY* THIS WORLD.

THEN WE SIMPLY HAVE TO *STOP* YOU...

...ANY WAY WE *MUST*.

RAVEN'S SOUL-SELF ENVELOPS THE SUDDENLY FRIGHTENED GORDANIAN, WHILE ANOTHER OF HIS SPECIES FINDS HIMSELF IN A STRUGGLE OF A *DIFFERENT* KIND...

STAND BACK, YOU FOOLS, AND *LISTEN* TO ME. DURING THESE PAST MONTHS WE HAVE *LEARNED* YOUR LANGUAGE...

...SO THAT WE CAN OFFER YOU YOUR ONLY *HOPE*.

SURRENDER TO THE CITADEL EMPIRE, OR YOUR PLANET WILL BE *DISINTEGRATED*.

HOLD IT, LISTEN TO *US*.

THERE ARE MANY *HEROES* HERE-- EVEN STRONGER THAN *WE* ARE.

SO WE MAKE THIS *OFFER* TO YOU. GIVE US BACK STARFIRE, OR *YOUR* ENTIRE *FLEET* WILL BE DESTROYED.

YOU DARE THREATEN *US*? VERY WELL, YOU'VE *SEALED* YOUR DOOM.

I WILL DISINTEGRATE YOU *MYSELF*!

YOU *HEARD* HIM!

FIRE!

BAM BAM!

GOOD GOD, YOU'VE *KILLED* HIM.

KID FLASH, HE HAD A *WEAPON* IN HIS HAND. HE WAS READY TO *USE* IT.

I KNOW. I *KNOW*. IT'S JUST THAT I'M STILL NOT *USED* TO THINGS LIKE THIS --*HOLD IT*.

SOMETHING'S *GOING ON*.

GET BACK!

FOOOMFF!

H-HE'S *GONE*? JUST LIKE *THAT*?

B-BUT *HOW*?

14

MEANWHILE...

SOMETHING IS WRONG... I NO LONGER *SENSE* THE ALIEN.

RAVE, YOU SEE WHAT *HAPPENED* DOWN THERE?

AZAR PROTECT ME! THE ALIEN-- WAS *DESTROYED!*

I-- I'VE TAKEN A *LIFE*.

I'VE *KILLED* HIM.

NO, RAVEN -- *LISTEN*...

FLASH'S GORDANIAN ALSO MADE AN *ASH* OF HIMSELF.

THESE GUYS GO *POOF* IF THEY'RE CAPTURED. YOU *DIDN'T* DO IT.

YES I *DID*, CHANGELING. BECAUSE OF ME HE *DIED*.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND, CHANGELING? I'VE *KILLED*. I'VE *KILLED*!!

WELL, "ALLSTATE" CERTAINLY WON'T GIVE ME A *GOOD-DRIVER'S DISCOUNT*.

BUT THEN, I DON'T THINK I'M *GOING* ANYWHERE. NOT IF YOU TWO--

FUMP!

NUTS!

THEY'VE TAKEN STARFIRE, AND THIS SHIP'S *DESTROYED*. WE CAN'T POSSIBLY USE IT TO *FOLLOW* THEM.

I KNOW. I *KNOW*. I'M TRYING THE J.L.A. SATELLITE, BUT I'M *NOT* GETTING THROUGH.

THEY MUST BE OUT ON A MISSION, TOO.

CYBORG TO ROBIN. I GOT ME ONE OF THE GORDANIAN SHIPS. WHAT DO YOU WANT *DONE* WITH IT?

HEY, BATBOY, COVER UP YOUR *LEGS* OR SOMEBODY MIGHT START ASKIN' QUESTIONS.

HOW BIG'S THE *SHIP*? HOW MANY OF US COULD IT *CARRY*?

THREE MAXIMUM. WHY?

C'MON BACK TO THE *TOWER*. I HAVE AN IDEA.

VICTOR, I COULD ALMOST *KISS* YOU.

15

TITANS' TOWER, ON A SMALL ISLAND IN NEW YORK'S EAST RIVER...

WE NEED *TWO* SPACE-SHIPS IF WE WANT TO RESCUE KORY.

NOW, CYBORG GOT US *ONE*, AND I REMEMBERED WHERE ANOTHER'S BEEN.

WE NEVER BOTHERED TO *SALVAGE* THE SHIP THAT BROUGHT KORY TO EARTH.

BUT IT IS BENEATH THE *OCEAN*. HOW CAN WE *REACH* IT?

WELL, RAVEN, THAT'S NOT REALLY SO *DIFFICULT*, WHEN YOU KNOW THE *SECRET*.

YOU WEREN'T WITH US WHEN WE RAN ACROSS AN OLD *FRIEND* A FEW MONTHS BACK.*

*AS SHOWN IN THE TITANS DIGEST. -- Len.

WHICH MIGHT BE THE REASON YOU'RE NOT AS FAMILIAR WITH--

--AQUALAD!

HI, WERE YOU LOOKING FOR A *SPACESHIP*, ROBIN?

JUMBO AND I JUST HAPPENED TO *FIND* ONE.

16

THANKS, WE REALLY *NEEDED* YOU.

NO PROBLEM, PAL. GLAD TO HELP.

BESIDES, I WASN'T DOING MUCH WHEN I GOT YOUR *MESSAGE*.

YOU WANT TO *JOIN* US?

IN SPACE? DON'T YOU REMEMBER MY STANDARD *PROBLEM*?

I NEED *WATER* EVERY HOUR. IT MIGHT GET *DRY* OUT THERE.

MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME, PAL-- I THINK I'LL STICK TO THE OCEANS AND LET LUKE SKYWALKER SOAR THROUGH THE STARS.

OKAY, AQUALAD, BUT WE REALLY WANT YOU TO CONSIDER *REJOINING* US SOMETIME-- EVEN IF YOU'RE *NOT* A REGULAR.

HEY, SHORTPANTS...

YOU GOT THE OTHER SHIP?

YEAH, VIC. AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S IN *WORKING* ORDER.

OKAY, LET'S GET IT OVER HERE AND MAKE CERTAIN ABOUT IT.

MEANTIME I'M TEACHIN' DONNA HOW TO *FLY* THE THING.

SEVERAL HOURS PASS, AND...

YOU GOT EVERYTHIN' SET, DONNA?

I CERTAINLY THINK SO, VIC.

THEN LET'S GO DO IT!

LET'S GO GET KORIAND'R.

THIS BABY HANDLES LIKE A *DREAM*. HOW'S IT WITH *YOU*, DONNA?

LITTLE ROUGH GETTING USED TO IT, VIC. BUT I'LL *MANAGE*.

HATE TO BE A *PARTY POOPER*, BUT WHERE ARE WE *GOING*?

GOOD QUESTION, GAR. THE ANSWER IS -- *STRAIGHT UP!*

THERE'S GOTTA BE A *MOTHER SHIP* HERE SOMEWHERE...

YEAH, BUT WE DON'T PICK UP ANYTHING ON THE *RADAR!*

WE DON'T *NEED* TO, WALLY. LOOK STRAIGHT AHEAD.

MAN, THAT MAKES THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE LOOK LIKE A *MATTEL TOY!*

YOU SURE THAT THING IS *REAL* AND NOT SOME KINDA *SPECIAL EFFECT?*

IT'S *REAL* ALL RIGHT, GAR. -- OKAY, WE'VE *FOUND* IT --

NOW WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET *INSIDE!*

I GOT IT, ROBBIE -- "SCOTTY, *BEAM* US ABOARD!"

OH WELL, SO MUCH FOR *WISHFUL THINKING*.

MEANWHILE...

MY SISTER'S FRIENDS HAVE *FOLLOWED* HER HERE.

EXCELLENT.

THEY WILL *DIE* ALONG WITH THEIR STUPID *PLANET*.

COME WITH ME. I WISH TO LET KORIAND'R KNOW THAT A *RESCUE MISSION* HAS COME TO SAVE HER...

I WILL ENJOY WATCHING HER FACE AS HER FRIENDS ARE *DESTROYED*.

WELL, WELL, KORIAND'R. HOW *ARE* YOU?

KOMAND'R? THEN IT'S *TRUE?* THE GORDANIANS *WEREN'T* LYING WHEN THEY SAID *YOU* WERE HERE.

LET ME *FREE*, SISTER, AND I'LL *CRUSH* YOUR STINKING BONES FOR WHAT YOU DID TO *TAMARAN*.

YOU'RE *SLIME*, KOMAND'R. I WOULD *KILL* YOU IF I HAD THE CHANCE.

BUT YOU *DON'T*, LITTLE SISTER. AND YOU NEVER *WILL*.

BESIDES, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR *BETTER*. I ALWAYS *WON* OUR LITTLE FIGHTS.

NOW, NOW, SWEET ONE. IS *THAT* ANY WAY TO GREET YOUR LOVING *SISTER* AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?

NOW, EXCUSE ME WHILE I *PUNISH* THESE LOUD-MOUTHED GORDANIANS.

I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE ONE TO TELL YOU I WAS HERE. THEY HAD NO RIGHT TO *SPOIL* MY SURPRISE.

I TELL YOU, THESE GORDANIANS ARE SUCH *BOTHERS!* THAT'S WHY I'VE HAD TO *PROGRAM* THEM TO *DIE* RATHER THAN BE DEFEATED.

YOU'D THINK BY NOW THE CITADEL WOULD ASSIGN ME *WARRIORS* AND NOT *SLAVERS* TO--

I PRATTLE ON, DON'T I, SWEET SISTER? WELL, DON'T *WORRY*, DEAR KORIAND'R, YOU WON'T HAVE TO *HEAR* ME MUCH LONGER.

19

I'VE SEVERAL EXQUISITE *TORTURES* IN MIND FOR YOU THAT I'VE BEEN PLANNING FOR *MONTHS* NOW.

IT WILL BE FUN WATCHING YOU *SQUIRM*...

...AND *SUFFER* BEFORE YOU EVENTUALLY *DIE*.

AH, *ENOUGH* OF THAT. I WOULDN'T WANT YOU UNCONSCIOUS EVEN BEFORE THE *FUN* BEGINS.

DO YOU *HEAR* ME, SISTER?

SPEAK UP, YOU DOG! *DO YOU HEAR ME?*

GO TO *HELL*, KOMAND'R.

OH, I'M CERTAIN I *WILL*... BUT NOT FOR A *LONG* TIME.

AND CERTAINLY NOT BEFORE YOUR *FRIENDS* SUFFER FOR KNOWING YOU.

THE TITANS?

YOU SEE ANY WAY *IN*?

NOT EVEN A *MOUSE HOLE*, ROBIN.

WHY DON'T WE JUST *BLAST* OUR WAY IN? WE'VE GOT THE *POWER*!

BUT WE DON'T HAVE THE *PROTECTION*, WALLY.

WE NEED *SPACE SUITS*, REMEMBER, FLASHER?

UNLESS YOU WANNA GO *BOOM* FIRST TIME YOU TRY TO *BREATHE* IN A VACUUM.

20

HOLD IT. SOMETHING'S GOIN' ON.

WE'RE TRAPPED IN SOME KINDA *LIGHT*.

ROBIN, I THINK IT'S A *TRACTOR BEAM*. MY SHIP'S SUDDENLY FROZEN IN SPACE.

IF *DARTH VADER'S* IN THAT SHIP--

THIS ISN'T ANY TIME FOR *HUMOR*, GAR--

VIC, CAN YOU GET US *OUT* OF HERE?

I'M *TRYIN'*, MAN...

...BUT I CAN'T BREAK US *FREE*.

BUT LOOK AT THE *LIGHT* SIDE, ROBBIE.

WE *WANTED* IN... AND THAT'S WHERE WE'RE *GOIN'*!

'COURSE, WE'RE NOT EXACTLY DEALIN' THIS HAND *OURSELVES*.

COMMANDER, WHAT *IS* IT?

WE HAVE *VISITORS*. SET UP A *BIO-SCAN* AND LINK IT IN WITH THE *DRONES*.

THEY WILL *ADAPT* TO GREET OUR STARFARERS....

...AND TO *DESTROY* THEM.

THIS SHIP HAS AN EVIL *AURA* ABOUT IT.

DO YOU SENSE *KORIAND'R* HERE, RAVEN?

I AM *SORRY*, DONNA. MY POWERS DO NOT HAVE ANY GREAT RANGE.

YET, I DO SENSE *EVIL*... TERRIBLE *EVIL*...

...COMING EVER *CLOSER*.

BUT BEFORE THE EMPATH CAN BUDGE...

HOLY COW! THAT THING GOT RAVEN!

ZZAKK!

THEY'RE LIKE LITTLE *GNATS* OR DRAGONFLIES... ONLY A HECKUVA LOT MORE *DANGEROUS*.

KEEP OUTTA THEIR *WAY!*

RAVEN'S *BREATHING*. SHE'LL BE *ALL RIGHT*.

FINE FOR *HER*. WHAT ABOUT *US*?

THEY ONLY SEEM TO BE THROWING *LASERS* AT US. WE CAN *AVOID* THEIR BLASTS.

BUT FOR *HOW LONG*, WONDY?

I TRY *CATCHIN'* 'EM AND THEY *EXPLODE* ON CONTACT.

ONE OF 'EM'S BOUND TO *GET US*.

BUT THEN...

WATCH OUT, NOW THEY'RE SHOOTING OUT *CABLES* AT-- *WONDER GIRL!?!*

DICK, THEY'RE TOO STRONG TO SNAP!

MOVE BEFORE--

TOO LATE, DONNA...

TROUBLE IS, THEY'RE SPEEDING UP. IT TAKES *EVERYTHING* I'VE GOT TO *AVOID* 'EM.

AGHHH!

IT GOT *GAR!* HIT HIM POINT BLANK.

AND ANOTHER ONE'S SHOOTING OUT THAT *OOZE*.

22

GROWING TOO FAST... SPREADING ALL OVER.

CAN'T *FREE* MY LEGS.

I NEED SOME *HELP* OVER HERE --*MFMFMMMM*

THE DRONES NOW TWIST IN MID-AIR AS THEY ANALYZE THEIR FINAL OPPONENT.

THEY ARE READY TO MOVE...

AND THEY DO...

SKREEEEEK

SWIFTLY...

WITH FINALITY.

OH, WELL, SO MUCH FOR YOUR *RESCUE.*

AND SO MUCH FOR YOUR *FRIENDS.*

PLEASE, DON'T *HURT* THEM.

HURT THEM? DON'T WORRY, SWEET SISTER.

I PROMISE YOU THEY WILL *DIE* LONG BEFORE THEY CAN FEEL ANY *PAIN.*

WITH A SUDDEN ACTION, PRINCESS KOMAND'R, LATE OF TAMARAN, PROPELS THE UNCONSCIOUS TITANS INTO THE INKY BLACKNESS OF AIRLESS SPACE.

NOOOOO!!

IN A MOMENT IT WILL ALL BE OVER.

THEY'RE *DONE* FOR, KORIAND'R. AND NOW WE'LL *DEAL* WITH YOU.

I'LL *KILL* YOU FOR THIS, KOMAND'R.

THAT, MY DEAR, I RESPECTFULLY *DOUBT!*

COMMANDER, CITADEL HIGH COUNCIL WANTS YOU ON THE HOME WORLD NOW.

OH, VERY WELL. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO *DESTROY* THIS PLANET ANOTHER TIME.

COMMENCE STAR-SLIDING!

AND, IN A MOMENT, THEY ARE GONE...

BUT...

I HAVE YOU, BUT I DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG I CAN *PROTECT* US.

MY SOUL-SELF CANNOT WITHSTAND THE *RAVAGES* OF SPACE FOR LONG.

THE JUSTICE LEAGUE SATELLITE, 23,300 MILES OVER THE PLANET EARTH...

THIS IS THE HOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER-HEROES...

...ASSUMING THEY'RE HOME, OF COURSE.

*WHICH, IN THIS CASE, THEY AREN'T.**

BUT...

EMERGENCY KLAXONS WEREN'T *KIDDING...*

THERE'S SOMEONE *TRAPPED* OUT THERE.

TRACTOR BEAM *ACTIVATED*

I JUST *HOPE* I'M IN TIME.

**FOR REASONS YOU CAN SEE IN J.L.A #207.--Len.*

A POWERFUL FINGER STABS AT THE COMPUTER CONSOLE...

...AND A J.L.A. TRACTOR BEAM PULSES THROUGH THE INKY BLACKNESS OF SPACE...

SOMETHING'S *HAPPENING.* WE'RE BEING DRAWN TO THE *JUSTICE LEAGUE SATELLITE!*

AND, MOMENTS LATER...

I DO NOT *BELIEVE* THIS. I COULD NOT HAVE HELD ON FOR A MOMENT *MORE*.

HEY, RAVE, YOU'RE ONE *COLD LADY*, YOU KNOW THAT?

WELL, VIC, THAT'S *YOU* ALL OVER.

FUNNY, LOGAN. WANT TO *EAT* MY FOOT?

NOT EVEN FOR *DESSERT*, BUDDY.

YOU'RE *ALIVE*. GOOD. I WAS AFRAID YOU WEREN'T GOING TO *MAKE IT*.

YOU!

I SHOULDN'T BE *SURPRISED*. WHO ELSE COULD HAVE *SAVED* US--

--BUT *SUPERMAN!*

IT WAS MY *PLEASURE*, ROBIN.

MIND EXPLAINING WHAT YOU WERE *DOING* OUT THERE?

I'D *LOVE* TO, SUPERMAN, BUT *AFTER* YOU'VE STOPPED THAT *SPACESHIP* THAT LEFT US HERE.

WITH *YOUR* POWERS THAT SHOULD PROVE A *SNAP!*

BUT I *CAN'T*, ROBIN.

WHAT? *WHY?*

I DON'T *HAVE* MY POWERS RIGHT NOW... AT LEAST NOT *ALL* OF THEM.

QUITE *LITERALLY*, ROBIN, I'M *HALF* THE SUPERMAN I ONCE WAS.*

THEN WE'RE *DEFEATED* EVEN BEFORE WE START.

*FOR THE *FULL* STORY, SEE *ACTION COMICS*, ON SALE NOW. -- Len.

AND KORY'S *GONE* ... PROBABLY BEING TAKEN TO HER *DEATH*.

I *HATE* FEELING SO HELPLESS, ROBIN. I SIMPLY *HATE* IT.

KORIAND'R, WE'LL *FIND* YOU... SOMEHOW, IN SOME MANNER, WE'LL GET YOU *BACK*...

...WE'LL GET YOU *BACK*.

NEXT ISSUE:

THE OMEGA MEN!

THE OMEGA MEN™ JOIN FORCES WITH...

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

ALL NEW! NO. 24 OCT.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE SATELLITE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ***JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA.*** ONLY MOMENTS AGO ***SUPERMAN*** SAVED THE LIVES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS. NOW...

DOES IT ***HURT,*** VIC?

NAH, DONNA. I ***LOVE*** GETTIN' MY MECHANICAL LEGS ***AMPUTATED.***

YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I ***DIG*** BEIN' REMINDED THAT I'M NOT ALL ***HUMAN.***

I STILL DON'T ***UNDERSTAND.*** YOU ONLY HAVE ***HALF*** YOUR POWERS?

THAT'S WHAT I ***SAID,*** ROBIN.

AND IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE HELP OF SOME NEW-FOUND ***FRIENDS,*** I MIGHT HAVE ***DIED*** BECAUSE OF MY LOSS.

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

CREATED BY MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ

AND FROM WHAT YOU TOLD ME OF STARFIRE'S *KIDNAPPING*, MY FRIENDS MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP *YOU*, TOO.*

YOU SEE, THEY'RE FROM THE *VEGAN* STAR SYSTEM--THE SAME AS *KORIAND'R*.

TITANS, LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO--

THE Omega MEN

THIS IS *NIMBUS*, AND *KALISTA* ALONG WITH HER HUSBAND, *PRIMUS*.

HARPIS, *BROOT* AND *TIGORR* ARE THE OTHERS.

PRIMUS, WHY ARE WE DELAYING OUR *DEPARTURE*?

WE HAVE THE *FUEL* TO RETURN HOME.

FOR ONCE *I AGREE* WITH HARPIS. WE ARE IN A *RUSH*.

*SEE *ACTION COMICS* #'S 535 & 536.--LEN.

CITADEL STRIKE!!

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PÉREZ
WRITER-CO-PLOTTERS-ARTIST
ROMEO TANGHAL, EMBELLISHER
TODD KLEIN, LETTERER
CARL GAFFORD, COLORIST
LEN WEIN, EDITOR

I KNOW YOU ARE, BUT THIS MIGHT NOT DELAY YOU.

PRIMUS, THESE ARE THE TEEN TITANS, AND ONE OF THEM HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED--BY THE CITADEL.

X'HAL'S BLOOD! THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

BUT IT'S TRUE, PRIMUS. HER NAME IS KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN. THAT'S A PLANET IN--

I KNOW WHERE TAMARAN IS, ROBIN. AND I KNOW YOUR PRINCESS KORIAND'R.

SHE AND HER SISTER TRAINED WITH KALISTA AND ME ON OKAARA WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN.*

I HAD HEARD THAT KORIAND'R WAS SLAIN BY THE CITADEL.

* TALES OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS #4.--LEN.

SHE WASN'T, PRIMUS. SHE'S ALIVE...OR AT LEAST SHE WAS BEFORE HER SISTER KIDNAPPED HER.

WE WANT TO RESCUE HER, BUT WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET THERE.

WHAT SHE'S SAYIN', MISTER, IS THAT IT AIN'T EASY THUMBIN' A RIDE THROUGH THE STARS--

--EVEN WITH A COPY OF THE "HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY."

I HELPED MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO RETURN TO YOUR STAR SYSTEM. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE THE TITANS WITH YOU?

WE ARE FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM, SUPERMAN. FREEDOM FROM THE TYRANNY OF CITADEL RULE.

IF THE CITADEL IS HOLDING KORIAND'R, THEN WE WILL RESCUE HER...

...OR THERE WILL BE HELL TO PAY.

STOP THAT, KID. OR ELSE.

HEY, NOT BAD... NOT BAD AT ALL.

WE WON'T FORGET THIS, PRIMUS. ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP, WE WILL.

THEN LET US GO, MY FRIEND.

THERE IS LITTLE TIME TO WASTE.

4

WORLDS WHIZ BY AT IMPOSSIBLE SPEEDS AS THE GORDANIAN SLAVE-SHIP STAR-SLIDES THROUGH THE DARK REACHES OF SPACE, CUTTING A CENTURIES-LONG JOURNEY TO LESS THAN FIVE DAYS.

SUNS BECOME MOMENTARY FLASHES OF LIGHT THAT COME AND GO WITH EACH BLINK OF AN EYE, ***GALAXIES*** ARE MERE BLURS...

...BUT, FOR PRINCESS KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN, THE JOURNEY TO HER HOME SYSTEM IS EXCRUCIATINGLY ***LONG...***

WELL, SISTER, IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE YOU'RE ON THE ***CITADEL HOMEWORLD.***

DO YOU KNOW WHAT SPECIAL ***TREAT*** IS IN STORE FOR YOU?

WE'RE ***ALTERING*** THE RULES FOR SLAVE-HOLDING, MY DEAR...

...NO MORE ***ONE YEAR TENURES*** FOR YOU.

YOU SEE, SWEET ONE, YOU'RE ***MINE*** NOW... MINE FOR AS LONG AS YOU ***LIVE*** --

--BUT, IF YOU PLAY YOUR CARDS ***RIGHT,*** MY DEAR -- YOUR LIFE WILL ***NOT*** BE A LONG ONE.

K...KOMAND'R...

...I-- I WANT TO KILL YOU!!

GET OUT OF MY WAY, GORDANIAN. IT'S YOUR **MISTRESS** I'M AFTER.

SKREEE

WHY DO YOU **DO** THIS TO YOURSELF, SISTER? YOU KNOW I CAN EASILY **DESTROY** YOU.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR **BETTER.**

BRRK

NO YOU **HAVEN'T,** KOMAND'R. NOT IN ANY **FAIR** BATTLE.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUR **EQUAL**, BUT WE'VE NEVER **FOUGHT** AS SUCH.

SKREEE

COMMANDER, **SHALL** WE--?

BACK, YOU WORTHLESS SLUGS. DO YOU THINK ME INCAPABLE OF **HANDLING** THAT WEAK FOOL?

ALL MY LIFE YOU'VE DONE EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO **RUIN** WHATEVER I'VE LOVED!

AARGH

BUT THIS I TELL YOU, KOMAND'R --WHEN YOU TURNED **TRAITRESS** TO TAMARAN, WHEN YOU REVEALED OUR **DEFENSE SECRETS** TO THE CITADEL--

--THEN I SWORE YOU WOULD **DIE!**

YES, **YES,** SISTER, GROW ANGRIER AND MORE CARELESS. YOUR BLASTS ARE **WILD** NOW...

BRAAK

6

...BUT MINE, SWEET ONE, *NEVER MISS!*

BRR

RAKTAKTAKTAK

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE *CARING* ONE, SISTER, THE ONE WHO TENDED THE WOUNDED CREATURES--

--WHO SEARCHED FOR *LOVE* INSTEAD OF HATE TO URGE HER ON.

BLAM

YOU WERE THE ONE EVERY-ONE *CARED FOR.* I WAS THE ONE EVERYONE *FEARED...*

...BUT I LEARNED TO TAKE THAT FEAR AND *USE* IT AS MY *STRENGTH.*

AND *THAT,* DEAR ONE, IS WHY I AM YOUR *BETTER.*

BUT, WHERE YOUR HEART BURNS AS BRIGHTLY AS THE STARS...

...MINE IS AS *BLACK* AS THE DEEP PITS OF HELL.

MEN *FEAR* HELL, AND ALL MEN SHALL FEAR THE POWER OF--

--BLACKFIRE!

I'VE *MONITORED* YOU, KORIAND'R. ON THAT PLANET YOU TOOK THE NAME *STARFIRE.* WELL, *I* SHALL TAKE A SECOND NAME AS WELL.

COMMANDER, WE ARE ENTERING *CITADEL SPACE.*

THE *HOMEWORLD* IS BEFORE US!

7

CITADEL HOMEWORLD! THE MOST *FEARSOME* PLANET THIS ALIEN GALAXY HAS EVER KNOWN.

MANY YEARS AGO THE CITADEL WAS ATTACKED BY THEIR MORTAL ENEMIES, ***THE PSIONS***, AND DURING THAT WAR THE HOME-WORLD'S MOON WAS ***SHATTERED*** AND TURNED INTO A RING OF FREE-FLOATING BOULDERS.

BOULDERS WHICH THE CITADEL HOLLOWED OUT, BUILT UPON AND THEN FINALLY ***ARMED.*** NOW, THE HOMEWORLD IS RINGED BY AN IMPENETRABLE ***FORTRESS*** THAT NO ONE, NOT EVEN THE PSIONS, HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BREACH.

8

A SMALL *FLIER* DESCENDS FROM THE SLAVE-SHIP TRAK'R...

...CONSTANTLY EMITTING A *SPECIAL CODE* WHICH PERMITS IT TO ENTER CITADEL SPACE.

IT CIRCLES THE HOME-WORLD, PASSING OVER OCEANS OF FROZEN *METHANE*, PAST MOUNTAINS OF ICY *SULPHUR*...

...UNTIL IT *LANDS* ON WHAT APPEARS TO BE A BLEAK AND BARREN PATCH OF ICE. EVERYTHING IN ALL DIRECTIONS SEEMS WHITE ...ENDLESS... *EMPTY.*

BUT...

KOMAND'R, COMMANDER OF THE SLAVE-SHIP TRAK'R?

YOU *KNOW* I AM. GET ON WITH IT, MAN.

YOU ALSO KNOW I DESPISE THE *COLD*... OPEN THE GATES AND LET ME *INSIDE.*

I HAVE MY *ORDERS*, KOMAND'R. YOU WILL WAIT HERE UNTIL A *SHIP* COMES TO TAKE YOU TO THE *INNER CORE.*

AND IF YOU DO NOT *LIKE* THE COLD...WELL, THAT IS SIMPLY *TOO BAD.* I'VE SUFFERED A *MONTH* ALREADY.

AH, *RELIEF* COMES, KOMAND'R...YOU'LL REST IN WARMTH *SOONER* THAN *I.*

WRONG, DOG! YOU'LL ROAST IN HELL--*NOW!*

A DEADLY BLAST OF BLACKFIRE'S STARBOLT ENDS THE GUARD'S *LIFE.* HIS FAMILY WILL NEVER KNOW HOW HE DIED.

AS THE HEATED LAND-SHIP SPEEDS ACROSS THE HOMEWORLD'S ICY TERRAIN, KOMAND'R SETTLES BACK, THINKING OF THE MEETING TO COME.

SOON SHE WILL BE STANDING BEFORE ***LORD DAMYN***, HIGH CHIEFTAIN OF THE CITADEL EMPIRE. LORD DAMYN, WHO PERSONALLY LED THE RAID ON VEGA'S SIXTEENTH PLANET, ***EUFORIX***...

...WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY EXILED THE LIVING GODDESS, ***X'HAL***; WHO SWEPT THE CITADEL ARMIES THROUGH ALL 22 VEGAN WORLDS AND OUTWORLDS ALIKE...

SPACE: ANOTHER STAR-SHIP SLIDES THROUGH THE EBON GLORIES OF THE UNIVERSE...

THERE IS NO ONE HIGHER OR MORE IMPORTANT THAN ***LORD DAMYN***.

PRINCESS KOMAND'R, COMMANDER OF THE SLAVE-SHIP TRAK'R. I HAVE BEEN SUMMONED HERE.

KOMAND'R WONDERS WHAT IT WOULD TAKE FOR HER TO ***REPLACE*** HIM.

PLEASE TELL LORD DAMYN THAT I ***AWAIT***.

...BUT INSIDE, ONE MAN CONTEMPLATES NOT THE ***BEAUTY*** THAT SURROUNDS HIM, BUT THE GRIM REALITIES OF THE ***WARS*** TO COME...

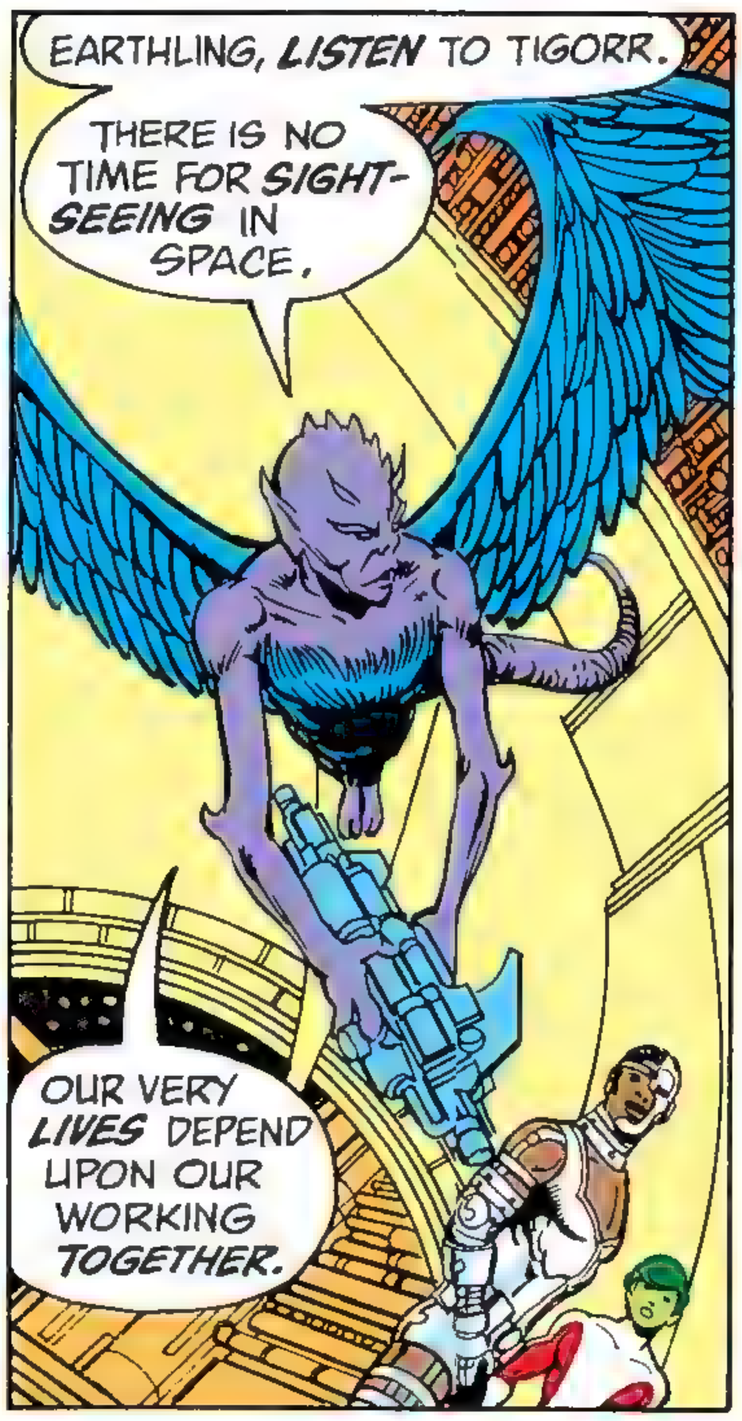
IF WE ARE TO ***RECAPTURE*** PRINCESS KORIAND'R, WE WILL HAVE TO ***FIGHT*** FOR HER.

TO FIGHT, WE WILL NEED MORE ***WARRIORS*** THAN WE HAVE.

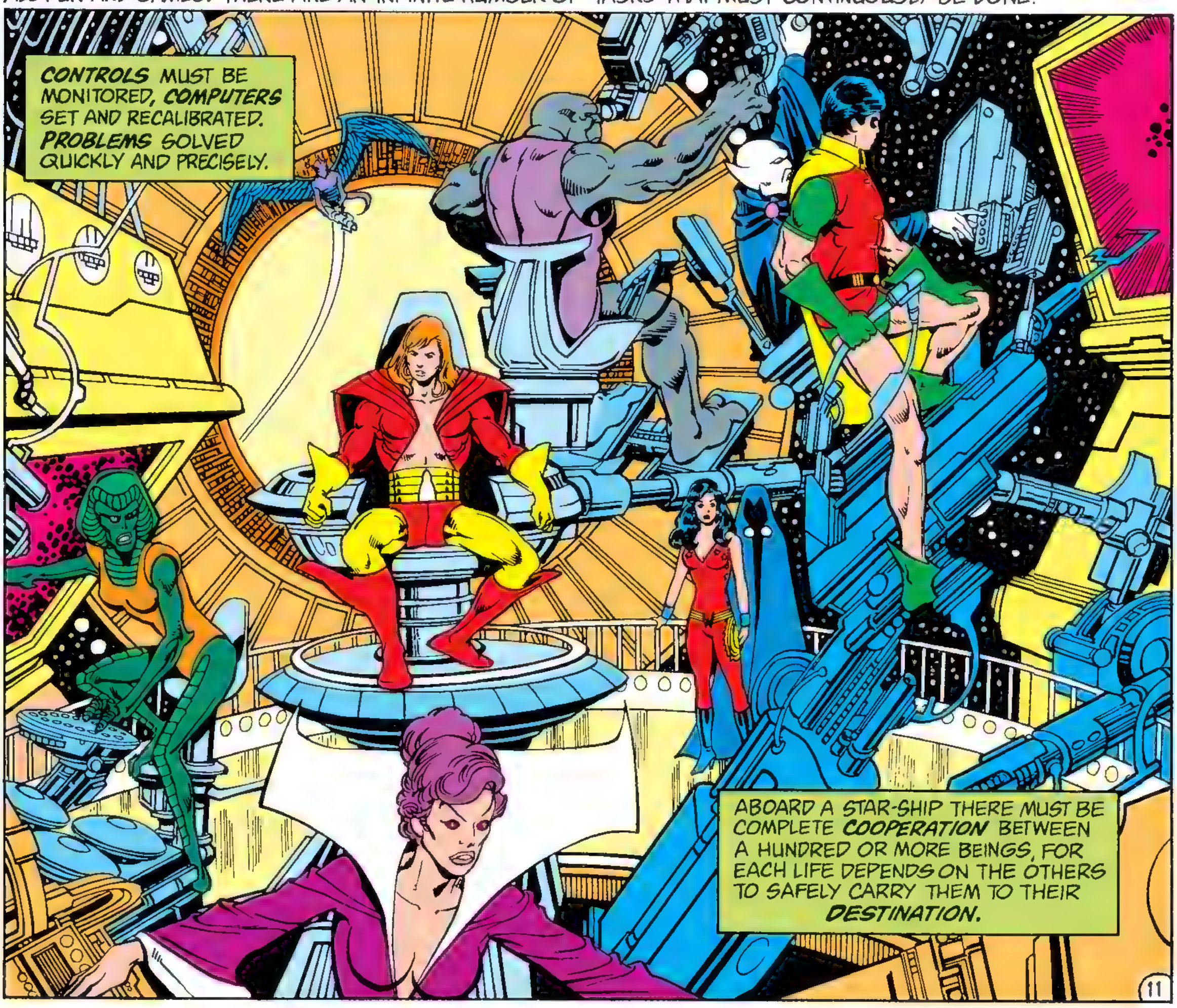
OUR FIRST STOP THEN MUST BE ***OKAARA***, THE WARRIOR-WORLD.







HARPIS' STINGING WORDS ARE TRUE. SPACE TRAVEL, NO MATTER WHAT THEY SHOW YOU IN THE MOVES, IS NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES. THERE ARE AN INFINITE NUMBER OF TASKS THAT MUST CONTINUOUSLY BE DONE.



AND EVEN THOSE WHO STAND ON THE OUTSIDE AT LEAST WORK BESIDE THEIR FELLOW TRAVELLERS...

SPEAK *ENGLISH*, DEMONIA, EVEN IF YOU DO NOT APPROVE OF OUR GUESTS. I DEMAND *COURTESY* HERE.

I *FEAR* THIS DEMONIA. I SENSE *EVIL* WITHIN HER. SHE WOULD *BETRAY* US ALL IF GIVEN THE CHANCE.

MAYBE *SO*, RAVEN, BUT WE CAN'T MOVE AGAINST HER.

IF THE OMEGANS *TRUST* DEMONIA, THAT WILL HAVE TO DO.

I UNDERSTAND, BUT I FEEL WE MUST MAINTAIN OUR *GUARD*.

HEY, GUYS--

MY INNER SOUL *TREMBLES* AS I NEAR HER.

--YOU GOTTA SEE THIS *SHIP!*

IT MAKES THE J.L.A. SATELLITE LOOK LIKE A *MEGO TOY!*

VERY WELL, PRIMUS, I'LL SPEAK SO THEY *UNDERSTAND* ME.

THESE EARTHLINGS WILL ONLY *HINDER* OUR MISSION. DESTROY THEM BEFORE THEY DESTROY *US*.

THEY ARE OUR *GUESTS*, DEMONIA. DO NOT *HARM* THEM.

OR, YOU WILL ANSWER TO *BROOT*.

THE CITADEL *MURDERED* MY CHILD AND SOLD MY WIFE INTO *SLAVERY*.

THEY ARE OUR ENEMIES, NOT THESE *EARTHLINGS*.

SOMETHING TELLS ME, NIMBUS, THAT WE'RE IN THE *WAY*.

NO. JUST *IGNORE* DEMONIA. SHE DESPISES *ALL* RACES BUT HER OWN.

WE WILL HELP YOU FIND YOUR *PRINCESS KORIAND'R* NO MATTER WHAT DEMONIA ESPOUSES.

WE'RE ALMOST **HOME**, THANK X'HAL. IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE I BREATHED THE COOL SEA-AIR OF **EUFORIX**...

...OR GAZED INTO ITS EMERALD SKIES, TO WATCH ITS THREE BRIGHT **MOONS**.

I PRAY OUR FORCED EXILE IS **OVER**, DEAR PRIMUS.

AS I PRAY THAT WE MIGHT YET **CRUSH** THE CITADEL TYRANNY THAT FORCED US TO FLEE.

THE CITADEL...

LORD DAMYN, I BRING YOU A **PRIZE**.

WAIT. JUST **WAIT**, KOMAND'R. ME GOT THIS HERE **SKRIG** TO KILL.

ME LIKE TO TEAR YOU APART, EH. YOU SCRATCHED ME **TEETH** WHEN YOU BRUSH THEM, YOU DID.

ME NO **LIKE** SCRATCHED TEETH, SKRIG. ME PROUD OF ME TEETH.

OH, YESSSS, ME LIKE THEM **CLEAN**, ME DO.

=GURGL=

HMMM. ME GET **IDEA**, ME DO. AHH, MAYBE ME TAKE **YOUR** TEETH AND WEAR THEM ON MINE.

WHAT YOU **THINK**, KOMAND'R?

UHHH, LORD DAMYN, I WISH TO SHOW YOU THE **FRUITS** OF MY VICTORIOUS MISSION TO EARTH.

LOOK! IT'S MY **SISTER**, KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN.

13

OHHHH? REALLY? PRINCESS KORIAND'R? YOU DO NOT PLAY JOKE ON LORD DAMYN, HIGH OF HIGHS, BEST OF BEST?

NO, OF COURSE YOU DO NOT. ME WOULD RIP OFF YOUR ARMS, ME WOULD. HO! WHAT JOKE THAT WOULD BE, EH?

YOU NOT LAUGH, KOMAND'R? BUT ME THINK IT WOULD BE FUNNY. OH YES, ME DO. HAH!

YOU WITH NO ARMS, MAYBE NO LEGS, EITHER. HMMM. YES, BIG JOKE, EH? EH?

HMMM. YOU PRETTY GIRL, KORIAND'R. YOU WANT TO KISS ME BECAUSE ME AM PRETTY, TOO, EH? COME, COME. KISS.

HMMM. WONDER, MAYBE YOU BE PRETTIER WITH NO ARMS AND LEGS.

LET GO OF ME!

OOOH, SHE TRY TO HURT LORD OF LORDS, HIGH OF HIGHS, BEST OF BEST.

KOMAND'R?

SKRAKKK!

I'VE STOPPED HER, LORD DAMYN.

BRAK!

BUT SHE HURT ME, SHE DID. ME SHOULD CUT HER INTO LITTLE PIECES FOR THAT.

MAYBE THEN EAT PIECES.

AND EAT YOU, TOO. WHY YOU LET HER HURT ME? YOU WANT BE CUT INTO PIECES?

OH, NO, NO, LORD DAMYN. YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO DO THAT.

I PROMISE YOU SHE'LL NEVER HURT YOU AGAIN.

OKAY.

14

ME NOT CUT YOU IN LITTLE PIECES *THIS* TIME.

HMMM. SAY, SINCE ME NOT EAT YOUR SISTER, ME VERY, VERY *HUNGRY,* ME IS. =burp=

COME, WE WILL ORDER *FEAST.* YOU HUNGRY, RIGHT?

OH, YES, LORD DAMYN. *VERY* HUNGRY.

YOU WANT EAT KORIAND'R, MAYBE, EH?

OH, NO-- DON'T GO TO THE *TROUBLE.*

OKAY. JUST ASKING. *MMMMMMM.* STARVED.

SHORTLY...

DO ME KNOW HOW *ENTERTAIN,* EH? ME SURE DO. COME. SIT.

THANK YOU, LORD DAMYN. ABOUT MY SISTER...

OH, DO NOT *THANK* ME, KOMAND'R. SHE WILL WIGGLE IN *ELECTRICAL CELL* UNTIL DINNER FINISHED...

...THEN WE *FRY* HER FOR DESSERT. SHE TASTE *GOOD,* EH?

UH, LORD DAMYN, MAY I ASK YOU A *FAVOR?*

SURE, SURE, KOMAND'R. YOU WANT *KISS,* RIGHT? ON YOUR HUMAN LIPS. THEY'RE *UGLY,* BUT SURE. WHY *NOT?*

NO, *AFTER* THE KISS, LORD DAMYN. I'D LIKE YOU NOT TO *SLAY* MY SISTER.

I WOULD LIKE HER FOR *MY OWN.*

OH, SURE, ME *UNDER-STAND,* SURELY DO. NO PROBLEM. ME WILL HAVE *HANDMAIDEN* COOKED INSTEAD.

SAY, YOU *LIKE* DINNER?

IT WAS *DELICIOUS.*

YES, SKRIG SURE HAD MORE *MEAT* ON HIM THAN ME THOUGHT.

GAGK!

15

SIR, CAN I PLEASE WAIT *OUTSIDE?*

YOU'LL BE SAFE FROM THAT LOUT. I PROMISE HE WON'T REND YOU LIMB FROM LIMB...

...AS HE DID YOUR *SISTER.* NOW, COME AND BE SILENT.

LORD DAMYN?

PSION? YOU WANT *ME?* EH? OF COURSE! *EVERYONE* WANTS ME. MOST *POPULAR* FELLOW, EH?

LORD DAMYN, WHY IS THAT *PSION* ALLOWED HERE? THEY ARE OUR *ENEMIES!*

PERHAPS YOU ARE *UNAWARE,* MY DEAR, THAT I AM AN EX-PATRIOT, NOW A *FIRM BELIEVER* IN THE CITADEL WAY.

I SERVE LORD DAMYN AS LOYALLY AS *YOU* DO.

YEP. HIM SCARED FOR MISERABLE LIFE, *TOO.* HEY, STUPID PSION, YOU WORK UP GOOD NEW *PLAN,* EH? PLENTY OF *KILLING?* HUH?

INDEED, LORD DAMYN. AN INTRICATE PLAN WHICH WILL INSURE THAT ALL THE VEGAN WORLDS ARE *YOURS.*

WE ARE GOING TO KIDNAP *X'HAL, THE LIVING GODDESS.*

IMPOSSIBLE! IT CAN'T BE *DONE!*

HEY, *LIKE* THAT, SURELY. WHAT YOU SAY, KOMAND'R?

MMM. OH, YES. *GOOD* PLAN. GOOD.

I *THOUGHT* YOU'D SEE THINGS MY WAY. WITH *X'HAL* UNDER OUR CONTROL--

--THE REVOLUTIONARIES WILL *HAVE* TO THROW DOWN THEIR ARMS...

...LEST WE PLAY *HAVOC* WITH THEIR GRIM, GOLD GODDESS.

THEN WE *EAT* THEIR ARMS, EH? HEY, THAT JOKE. *LAUGH!*

HMMM. QRULL, YOU WANT *LEG BONE?*

SURE. SURE *DO,* LORD DAMYN.

VERY GOOD THEN. I SHALL COMMENCE OPERATIONS *IMMEDIATELY.*

BY TOMORROW THIS TIME, X'HAL WILL BE *OURS!*

16

...THIS DAMYN IS THE *CITADEL LORD?* HE SOUNDS LIKE A *FOOL!*

HE'S A MURDERING *BARBARIAN*, VICIOUS AND TOTALLY DEMENTED. BUT NEVER *UNDERESTIMATE* HIM, ROBIN.

HE WRESTED *CONTROL* OVER THE CITADEL HOMEWORLD FOR HIMSELF AND THEN SYSTEMATICALLY SUCCEEDED IN *INVADING* ALL THE VEGAN WORLDS.

THE *SHUTTLE* IS READY.

HE MAY BE NEAR MINDLESS IN *MOST* THINGS, BUT HE'S DEADLY IN *WARFARE.*

AN *IDIOT SAVANT.* GREAT! JUST WHAT WE NEED.

PRIMUS, HOW MANY ARE COMING *WITH* US TO OKAARA?

ONLY THE *BRIDGE CREW,* KALISTA ...ALONG WITH THE *TITANS.*

OH, ALERT *AURON.* HE'LL WANT TO *BE* THERE.

AURON?

SOMETHING TELLS ME HE ALREADY *KNOWS.*

I SENSED OUR APPROACH. I AM *READY.*

AURON AWAITS HIS MEETING WITH *X'HAL.*

HEY, DON'T--

IT WON'T *HURT,* CHANGELING. I AM MERELY FITTING YOU WITH AN *INSTANTANEOUS LANGUAGE TRANSLATOR.*

WHY DIDN'T I HAVE ONE'A THESE WHEN I TOOK *HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH?*

THE WARLORDS HAVE BEEN *NOTIFIED.*

IGNITION PRIMED. *WE GO!*

THEY LEAVE, SIX TEEN TITANS AND A HANDFUL OF OMEGA MEN.

TO THE OMEGANS, OKAARA IS THEIR FIRST STEP *HOME.* TO THE TITANS, IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THEIR SEARCH FOR THEIR *FRIEND.*

17

OKAARA IS A PLANET UNLIKE ANY *OTHER.* ITS WONDERS MUST BE BEHELD TO BE *BELIEVED.*

AN' MY *STOMACH* MUST BE HELD BEFORE I *HEAVE.* TAKE IT EASY WITH THOSE SUDDEN *DROPS,* PRIMUS.

I *APOLOGIZE,* CYBORG. I HAVE ALREADY *ACCUSTOMED* MYSELF TO THE INDELICATE PROBLEMS OF *STAR-TRAVEL.*

OKAARA IS A DEAD WORLD, BARREN ON ITS *SURFACE.* BUT, UNDERNEATH--

--HIDDEN IN ITS ENDLESS CAVERNS AND CATACOMBS--

--THAT IS WHERE THE *TRUE* OKAARA STILL PROUDLY STANDS.

KORIAND'R *TOLD* US ABOUT THIS PLACE, BUT THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD HAVE DONE IT *JUSTICE.**

*TITANS MINI-SERIES #4. WELL WORTH BUYING! -- LEN, MARV, GEORGE, ERNIE & TODD.

YOU WEREN'T *KIDDIN',* RED. WE'RE COMPLETELY *UNDERGROUND.*

OKAARA IS NOT BATHED IN DARKNESS, YET ITS LIGHT IS A *NATURAL* ONE.

MERELY THE *FIRST* OF ITS MANY *MIRACLES.*

WHERE IS *X'HAL?* I MUST *SEE* HER.

YOUR MOTHER HAS BEEN *WAITING* FOR YOU, AURON. COME WITH ME.

MOTHER? X'HAL'S HIS *MOTHER?*

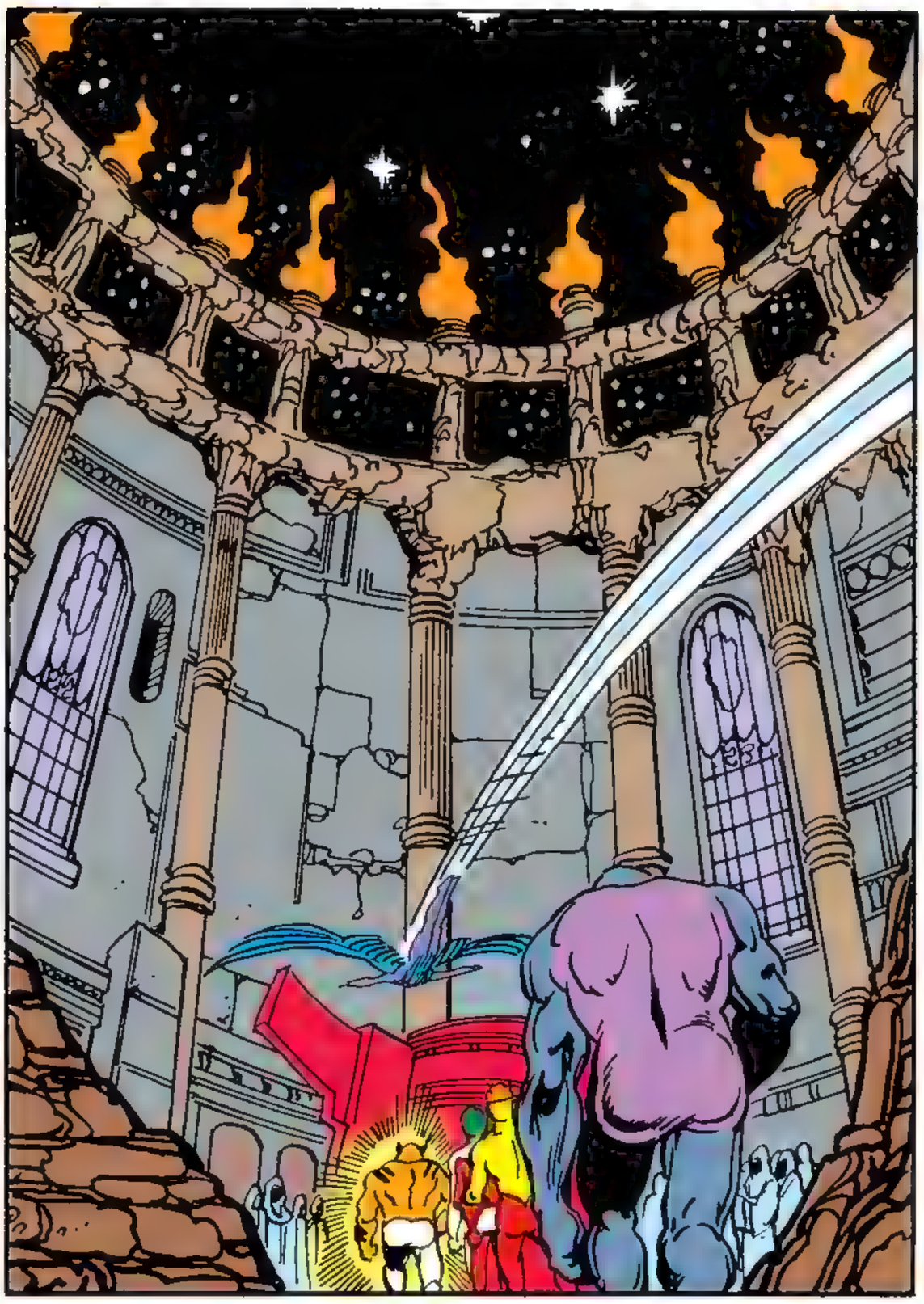
IS SOMETHING *WRONG,* LITTLE ONE?

YEAH. I JUST REALLY REALIZED WE'RE NOT IN *KANSAS* ANYMORE. I'M STUNNED.

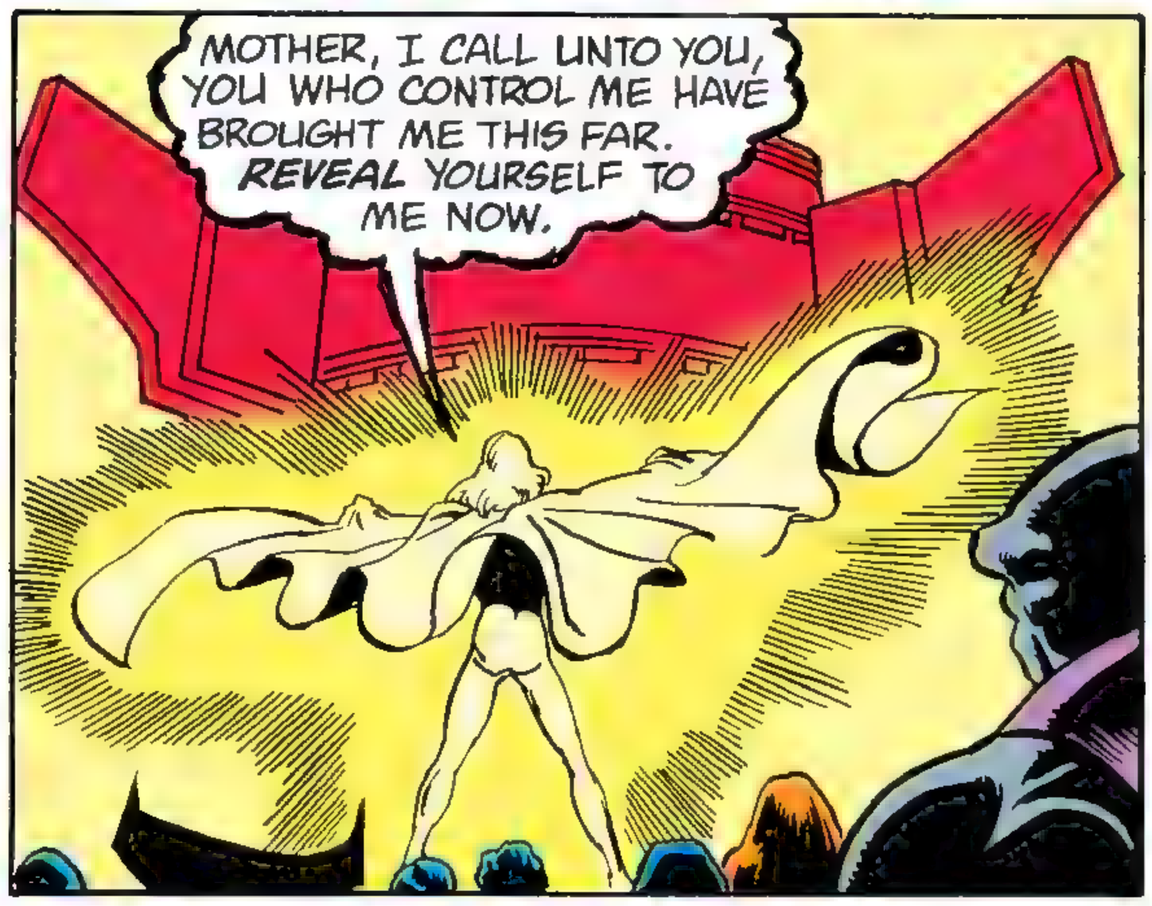
"AND YOUR LITTLE DOG *TOTO,* TOO."

18

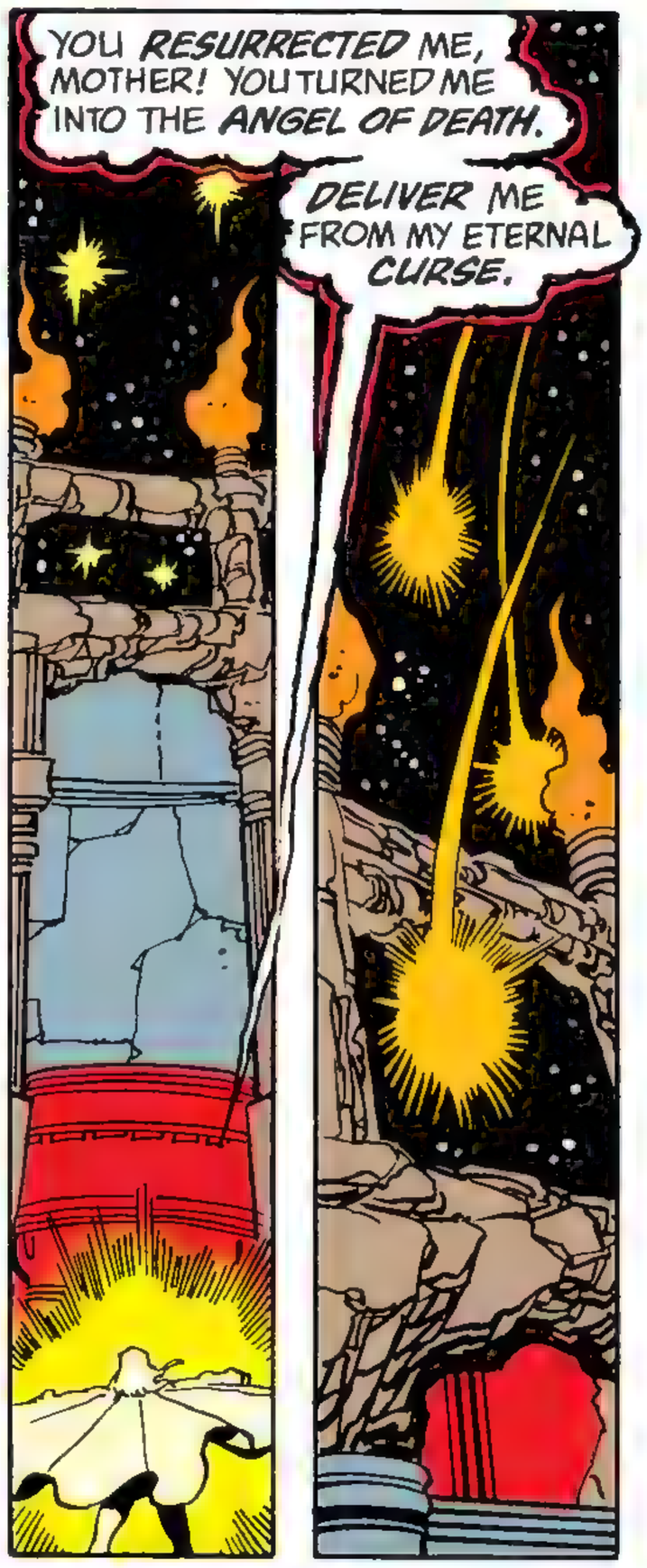
THEY MARCH THROUGH DEEP ***CATACOMBS*** CUTTING FAR BENEATH THE PLANET'S SURFACE, YET THEY STILL CAN SEE THE UNFAMILIAR ***STARS*** TWINKLING OVERHEAD.

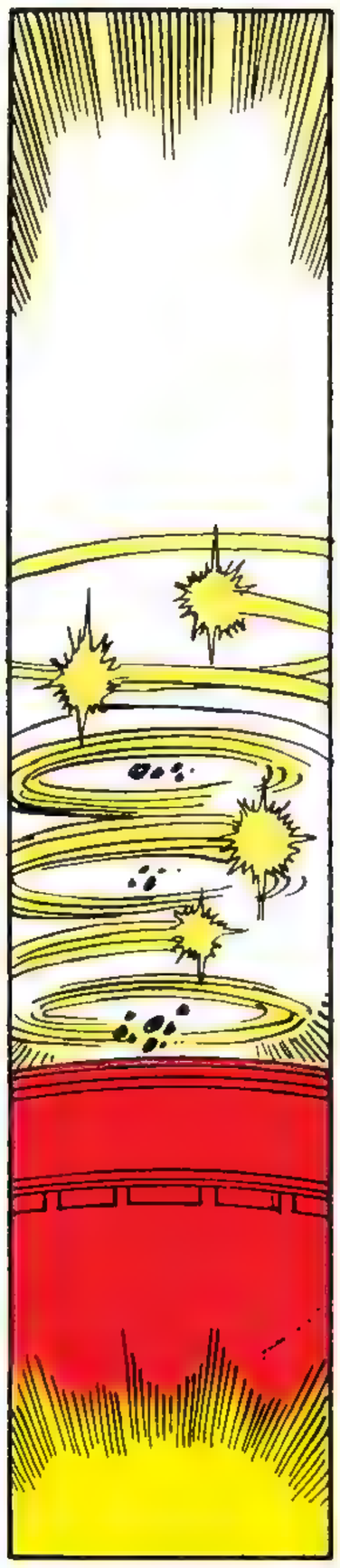


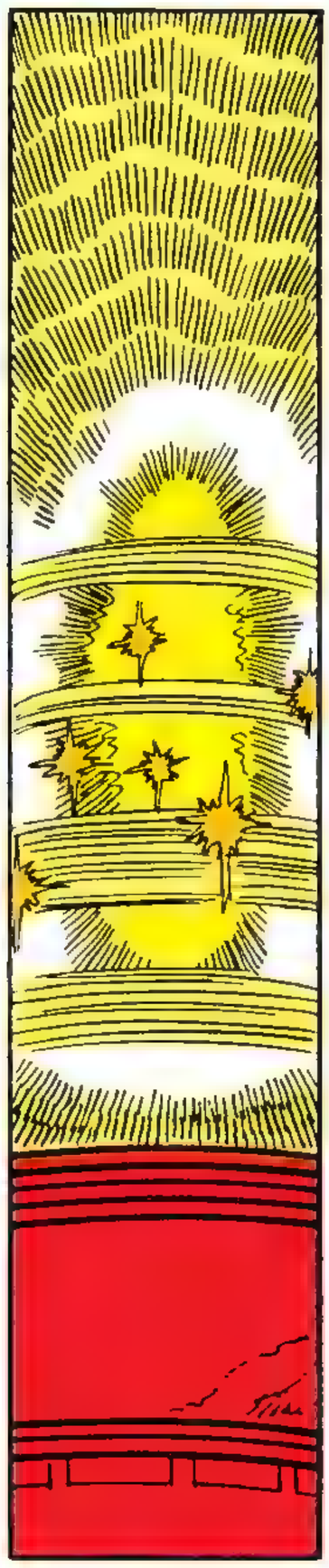














I STAND *REFORMED* BEFORE YOU, AURON--HE WHO WAS ONCE *LAMBIEN* --MY CHILD.

YOU BESEECH ME TO END YOUR LIFE, YET THAT IS *DENIED* ME.

I CRY OUT FOR *VENGEANCE*, AND YOU ARE MY *HANDS*.

I-I CAN'T SEE. HER DAMNED LIGHT *BLINDS* ME.

GET AWAY FROM ME, X'HAL. *GET AWAY!*

BUT WHY MUST I DEAL DEATH TO *OTHERS* WHEN THAT IS FOREVER DENIED *ME?*

WHY DO YOU FORCE ME TO SLAY YOUR *ENEMIES?* WHY, MOTHER-- *WHY?*

BECAUSE I NEED A *GOD* AT MY SIDE.

I'M *NOT* A GOD. I'VE BECOME A DAMNED *DEVIL*.

YOU WILL DO WHAT *MUST* BE DONE.

YOU WILL AVENGE YOUR MOTHER'S *DEATH*.

AND YOU SHALL DO SO-- *NOW!*

OKAARA! HEED US! THE CITADEL DEMANDS A HOSTAGE OR YOUR PLANET SHALL BE DESTROYED!

MY *INSTRUMENT*.

MY *WEAPON*.

YOU SHALL *SUCCEED* WHERE I HAVE *FAILED*.

WE WANT X'HAL! GIVE HER TO US NOW!

NO! MOTHER, YOU DO IT TO ME AGAIN!

MY ANGER GROWS! MY RAGE SUDDENLY SWELLS!

AND IT CANNOT BE ABATED UNTIL I HAVE KILLED!

I SHALL BE AVENGED! AND YOU, MY SON, SHALL BE MY AVENGER!

DO AS X'HAL COMMANDS!

I SHALL... BECAUSE I MUST.

I RESIST, BUT IT DOES ME NO GOOD.

MY EVERY FIBER FIGHTS OUT, CRIES OUT AND SAYS "NO!" BUT I CANNOT HELP WHAT I DO.

EVEN WITH THESE DEATHS, MY ANGER STILL GROWS. X'HAL WILL NOT RELEASE ME UNTIL HER BLOODY APPETITE IS SATED.

NOT EVEN THE DESTRUCTION OF AN ENTIRE CITADEL SHIP PLEASES HER NOW.

WHEN WILL THIS END? X'HAL, WHEN WILL IT END?

IF THE CITADEL ATTACKS--

-- IT IS OUR DUTY TO RESIST!

NOW THE BATTLE BEGINS!

THEY HAVE THEIR FIGHT AND WE HAVE OURS. WE SPLIT UP AS WE SAID EARLIER.

GAR, THIS IS UP TO YOU.

21

THINK YOU CAN *HANDLE* THIS?

BELIEVE IT, ROBBIE. PRESTO, CHANGE-O

--AND YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE CUDDLIEST *GORDANIAN* EVER TO BE BORN IN *WESTCHESTER COUNTY.*

JUST DON'T *OVERPLAY* YOUR HAND.

WE DON'T KNOW *TOO MUCH* ABOUT THIS CITADEL.

SURE WE DO, ROB. PRIMUS FILLED US IN ON THE WAY HERE.

I'LL JUST TOSS AROUND A FEW *WORDS...*

NO! DON'T TALK UNLESS YOU *HAVE* TO.

SPOILSPORT.

WAR IS NOT A *PRETTY* THING, NO MATTER IF ON EARTH OR ON SOME DISTANT WORLD.

THE PURPOSE OF WAR IS SINGULAR: *TO KILL!*

THE SIDE THAT KILLS THE OTHER SIDE *WINS...*

...NO MATTER HOW *FEW* SOLDIERS THEY HAVE REMAINING.

AND SO, WAR BEGINS...

...A WAR TO SAVE A *GODDESS...*

...OR SO SOME *THINK.*

22

HERE COMES THE *FIRST* TEST. TAKE IT EASY.

SURE, SURE. LEAVE IT TO *ME*.

HALT! WHO GOES THERE?

I HAVE *PRISONERS* TO BE TAKEN TO THE HOME-WORLD FOR *QUESTIONING*.

ON WHOSE *ORDERS*? I RECEIVED NO NOTIFICATION.

ARE YOU GOING TO LET ME THROUGH OR DO I *BLAST* YOU?

IXNAY ON THE LASTERBAY. YOU'RE *OVERDOING* IT.

ALL RIGHT. ENTER THE TRANSPORT.

WHAT DO I CARE ABOUT OUR *ENEMIES*? MOVE ON.

Whew!

I DON'T WANT TO GO THROUGH *THAT* AGAIN.

WHAT ARE *YOU* COMPLAINING ABOUT? I GOT US THROUGH.

AND NEARLY GAVE ME A CORONARY. DON'T TALK, GAR. PLEASE.

I CAN *PROVE* MYSELF, ROB! GIVE ME A CHANCE.

THE TRANSPORT RISES TO MEET THE MOTHER-SHIP HIGH OVERHEAD. AND, SOON...

I'VE GOT PRISONERS FOR INTERROGATION. WE MUST GET TO THE HOMEWORLD *IMMEDIATELY*.

WHEN WE'RE *DONE* WITH THEM, BE PREPARED TO TAKE THEM TO THE ...UHH... *PRISON PLANET* FOR EXTERMINATION.

THE PRISON PLANET? OHH. INTERESTING...

...CONSIDERING THE PRISON PLANET WAS LEFT IN RUIN LESS THAN A MONTH AGO. WE'VE *ABANDONED* THAT WORLD.

YOU ARE A *SPY*. TELL ME WHO YOU ARE--

--OR YOU SHALL SURELY *DIE*!

OOPS.

23

NEXT: BE PREPARED AS WE *EXPLODE* INTO OUR *THIRD* AND *GREATEST* YEAR OF THE *NEW* TEEN TITANS WITH... WAR!!


THE NEW TEEN
TITANS™
ALL NEW!
NO. 25
NOV.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SURRENDER, TITANS--OR I'LL UNLEASH THE DEADLY X'HAL!
YOU SURRENDER, BLACKFIRE--OR WE'LL TERMINATE YOUR PRECIOUS LEADER!
LOOKS LIKE WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A...
STAND-OFF!
EXTRA! FREE 16-PAGE COMIC PREVIEW
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATE: STARFIRE, ALSO KNOWN AS PRINCESS KORIAND'R OF TAMARAN HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED FROM EARTH BY HER EVIL SISTER, BLACKFIRE, ALSO KNOWN AS KOMAND'R.



THE VIOLENCE HERE IS UNENDING AND EVER-ESCALATING. I FEEL IT CUTTING THROUGH MY VERY *SOUL*.

TO AN *EMPATH*, ONE WHO LIVES OFF THE EMOTIONS OF OTHERS, SUCH HORROR CAN BE... *DEVASTATING*.

RAVEN: ONE OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS.

THIS FIGHT WILL END SOON, EARTHLING. BROOT WILL *DESTROY* ALL THESE KILLERS.

BROOT: ONE OF THE OMEGA MEN. THE CITADEL KILLED HIS CHILD AND SOLD HIS WIFE INTO SLAVERY.

RAVEN, WE'LL GET *THROUGH* THIS! TRUST ME. WE'VE *GOT* TO IF WE WANT TO FIND KORY.

KID FLASH: HE LOVES THE EMPATH NAMED RAVEN. HE ALSO FEARS THE SOURCE OF HER POWERS.

WE CANNOT LET THEM TAKE *X'HAL* FROM OKAARA. ONLY THE FABLED WARLORDS CAN HOLD HER POWERS IN CHECK.

PRIMUS: PSIONIC LEADER OF THE OMEGA MEN...

...AND NIMBUS: WIELDER OF THE DEATH-CLOUD...

THAT IS SIMPLE TO *SAY*, PRIMUS, BUT THOSE OF THE CITADEL *OUTNUMBER* US.

WE CANNOT HOPE TO *STOP* THOSE SAVAGES.

2

THEN, FRIEND NIMBUS, WE SHALL *DESTROY* THEM.

SO SPEAKS AURON, GOD OF LIGHT, GOD OF DEATH!

REMEMBER, IT IS MY *MOTHER* THEY WISH TO TAKE. WHO BETTER THAN I KNOWS WHAT *DESTRUCTION* THEY WOULD UNLEASH?

IT IS *X'HAL'S* VENGEFUL HAND WHICH GUIDES MY OWN. IT IS *HER* LUSTFUL WRATH WHICH *CONTROLS* ME.

I KILL BECAUSE SHE *FORCES* ME TO.

TO HAVE HER IN THE HANDS OF *THE CITADEL* WOULD BE TO UNLEASH A POWER UNLIKE ANY THIS UNIVERSE HAS EVER SEEN.

RAVEN DOUBTS AURON'S WORDS. SHE HAS SEEN TRIGON'S POWER. AND IT IS HE WHOM SHE FEARS THE MOST.

STILL, EVEN THIS SEEMINGLY EMOTIONLESS EMPATH TREMBLES WHEN SHE HEARS X'HAL SHOUT TO THE HEAVENS THEMSELVES...

I WILL BE *FREE*, MY SON. FREE FROM THIS PRISON I HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO.

I, WHO SAVED ALL VEGA, WILL BE CHAINED NO LONGER.

FREE ME, CITADEL, SO I MAY DESTROY YOU AND ALL YOUR BLOODY KIND.

X'HAL, WE *REVERE* YOU, BUT YOU MUST NOT *LEAVE* THIS WORLD.

ONLY ON OKAARA CAN YOU BE *CONTROLLED*.

ONLY *HERE* CAN THE PEOPLE WHO WORSHIP YOU BE *SAFE*.

KALISTA IS A WITCH, AND SHE, TOO, IS AN OMEGAN...

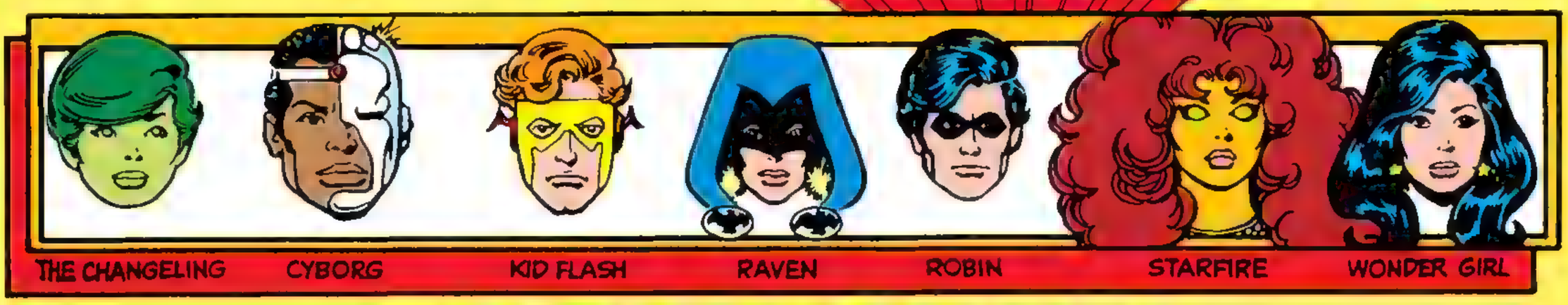
...AS IS TIGORR, WHO SAVAGELY SWEEPS THROUGH THE CITADEL HORDE...

3

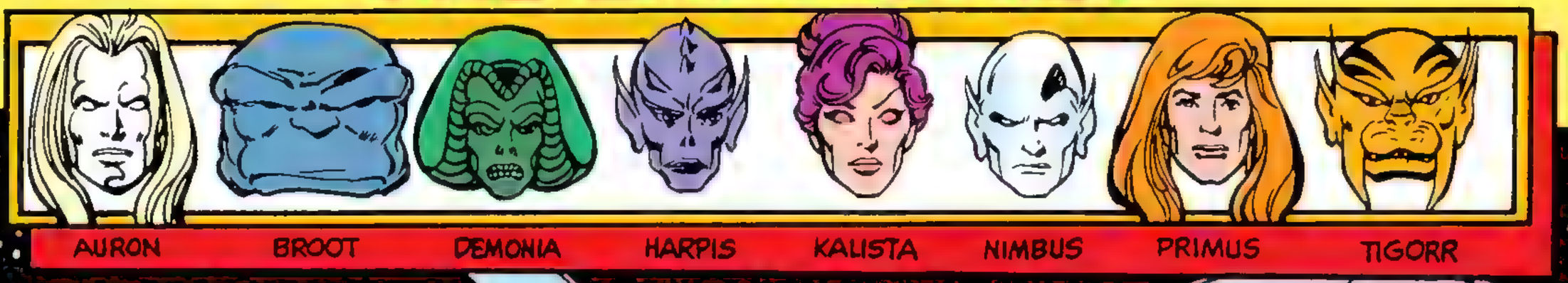
WAR HAS BEEN DECLARED, AND THE TITANS MUST SOMEHOW HELP WIN THIS WAR OR THEY MAY NEVER SEE KORIAND'R AGAIN. NOW, BE PREPARED AS WE EXPLODE INTO OUR THIRD AND GREATEST YEAR OF --

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

Co-created by:
MARV WOLFMAN
and
GEORGE PEREZ



THE OMEGA MEN



ABOVE THE PLANET OKAARA, A CITADEL WARSHIP PREPARES TO DOCK.

BUT WATCH CAREFULLY. THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM.

WAR!

MARV WOLFMAN & GEORGE PEREZ
writer -- co-plotters -- artist

ROMEO TANGHAL
embellisher

CARL GAFFORD - colorist
BEN ODA - letterer

LEN WEIN
editor

Featuring characters created by MARV WOLFMAN + JOE STATON

4

GORDANIAN, YOU ARE A *SPY*. TELL ME WHO YOU *TRULY* ARE OR YOU WILL *DIE*.

DOES THE NAME *RUBY BEGONIA* STRIKE A FAMILIAR NOTE?

HOW ABOUT LUKE SKYWALKER? FLASH GORDON? CAPTAIN KIRK? WOULDYA BELIEVE ROCKY JONES?

NEVER *HEARD* OF THEM, HAVE YOU? WELL, THIS BLOWS THAT THEORY THAT OUR TV SHOWS KEEP PLAYING RERUNS THROUGH SPACE.

SHUCKS, I REALLY WANTED TO SEE IF THEY LIKED "LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY" ON *MARS*.

GORDANIAN, YOU ARE TALKING LIKE A *MADMAN*. DO YOU WANT TO *DIE*?

AHHH. MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS. I ALWAYS DID *WELL* ON THOSE.

I SELECT '*E*'--*NONE* OF THE ABOVE.

MOVE IT, GREEN-GENES! YOU'RE JUST SCREWING UP THE WORKS!

LET *ME* AT THAT GOOFBALL!

SKRAAK!

WHAT *TOOK* YOU SO LONG, RUSTHEAD? I WAS RUNNING OUT OF *GOOD MATERIAL*.

WE WERE WAITING TO SEE IF YOU'D *HANG* YOURSELF, GAR.

KLANG!

I TOLD YOU TO KEEP *QUIET*. YOU ALMOST BLEW *EVERYTHING*!

OKAY, OKAY, *SUE* ME. I FOULED UP AGAIN. FIRE ME FROM THE TITANS.

MAKE ME JOIN "*THE ZOO CREW*." I'D FIT RIGHT IN.

SPOK!

ON THE *OTHER* HAND, MAYBE I CAN *REDEEM* MYSELF. HI. GUESS WHO'S GOT MR. BLASTER NOW?

SO, UNLESS YOU WANT SOME LASER-INDUCED *CAVITIES*, DO WHAT THE KID IN THE SILLY SHORT-PANTS SAYS.

TAKE US TO *THE CITADEL*. *NOW*!

OOOK!

5

AS THE CHANGELING'S THREAT URGES THE CITADEL WARRIOR TO HASTEN HOMEWARD...

I WISH THIS WASN'T ALL SO *WASTED*.

I DON'T *WANT* TO FIGHT-- I SIMPLY WANT TO LOCATE KORY AND TAKE HER *HOME*...

HERA! WHY DO I KEEP THINKING THE *END* OF THAT SENTENCE SHOULD BE--"IF SHE'S *ALIVE*"?

I'VE GROWN TO *CARE* FOR HER, TO LOVE HER LIKE A *SISTER*.

SHE'S AS MUCH "FAMILY" TO ME AS MY *MOTHER*, OR EVEN *DIANA*.

OKAARA IS THE PLANET OF **WARLORDS**. THIS IS WHERE VEGAN KINGS AND EMPERORS SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO LEARN THE ART OF **WARFARE**.

BUT...

SO, ONE SHIP AVOIDED *DESTRUCTION*, EH?

WELL, IT SHALL NOT FIND *FREEDOM*,

AS MUCH AS I *FIGHT* MY MOTHER'S WILL, STILL SHE *CONTROLS* MY EVERY MOVEMENT...

I AM FORCED TO REACH OUT, FORCED TO *EMBRACE* ALL ABOUT ME...

...FOR MY TOUCH BRINGS INSTANT AND TERRIBLE *DEATH*!

AND THE OKAARANS ARE **MASTERS** OF THEIR TRADE, AS THE CITADEL QUICKLY LEARNS.

6

FOR ONCE THE WAR GOES *OUR* WAY, EARTHLING. WE HAVE THEM ON THE RUN.

I WOULDN'T START BUILDING ANY *CONDOS* HERE, TIGORR --

--WE'RE STILL GREATLY *OUTNUMBERED!*

BUT NOT FOR MUCH *LONGER*, EARTHMAN.

SKRUK!

I... DO NOT *BELONG* HERE...

...TO *FIGHT* IS NOT MY WAY.

TO SPILL BLOOD *SICKENS* ME. MINE IS THE POWER TO *HEAL*, NOT TO KIL--

AZAR HELP ME! AS FAST AS I *HELP* THESE PEOPLE, AS QUICKLY AS I *HEAL* THEIR PAINS--

--ANOTHER *FALLS* BEFORE ME. ANOTHER *DIES!*

FOR EACH ONE I *SAVE*, TWO MORE *PERISH*.

THIS IS *MADNESS!* TO *HATE* IS MADNESS! TO *KILL* IS MADNESS!

ARRRRHH! THEIR PAIN FLOODS OVER ME. BEFORE I CAN *DISPEL* THEIR AGONIES, MORE PAIN *ASSAILS* ME!

I... CANNOT *ABSORB* ALL THEIR HORROR. I CANNOT FIGHT THE OVERPOWERING TIDE...

OH, LORD AZAR... DEATH IS EVERYWHERE... MY DEFENSES CANNOT ...PROTECT ME...

I HURT, AZAR... THE PAIN... THE BLOOD, THE ANGUISH ...THEY HURT ME... THEY--

AGHHHH!

THE HORROR IS UNBEARABLE! *AZAR HELP ME!*

7

I...CANNOT FIGHT IT... ALL THOSE SOULS REACHING OUT TO ME...

I AM--AN *EMPATH*. I HEAL PAIN, BUT NOW THAT PAIN STAYS WITHIN ME... TOO MUCH TO SHUT OUT... TOO MUCH TO ABSORB...

OH, NO... *NO!* IT CLAWS INSIDE ME NOW...

...CLUTCHING AT ME LIKE SOME DAMNED DEMONIC HAND --REACHING FOR MY SOUL.

NO!!

IT MUST NOT REACH MY *SOUL-SELF*... MUST NOT RELEASE MY SOUL.

BUT...BUT I CANNOT *CONTROL* IT ANY LONGER... I CANNOT *FIGHT* IT...

IT HAS MY *SOUL-SELF* NOW... IT TEARS THROUGH ALL MY *PROTECTIVE BARRIERS*...

I CAN *FEEL* THE EVIL... FEEL THAT WHICH IS *TRIGON*... I FEEL IT SEETHING... SURGING... DESPERATELY THRASHING TO BREAK THROUGH ALL MY *RESTRAINTS*...

ARGHHHH!!

SOMETHING IS *WRONG*, EARTHMAN. DO YOU FEEL THE *EVIL*?

IT IS *OVERPOWERING!*

RAVEN? IT'S RAVEN. MY GOD!

PRAY TO YOUR GOD, WALLACE. PRAY THAT THE PART OF ME WHICH IS MY FATHER, TRIGON, DOES NOT BURST *FREE!*

PRAY, WALLACE... I NEED YOUR PRAYERS... I *NEED* YOUR PRAYERS!

BUT PRAYERS DO NOT A MIRACLE MAKE. THAT WHICH IS RAVEN'S SOUL IS FELT EVERYWHERE AT ONCE...

...DEEP BENEATH OKAARA'S ROCKY SURFACE...

...AS WELL AS HIGH ABOVE IN STAR-STUDDED SPACE...

... WHERE THE MAN-GOD AURON SENSES AN EVIL GREATER EVEN THAN THAT OF X'HAL. HE SHUDDERS. HE CAN DO NOTHING MORE.

8

I AM YOU, RAVEN. YOU ARE EVIL AS AM I.

NO! NO! I WILL NOT LET YOU BE *RELEASED*. I WILL NOT BECOME YOUR *DAUGHTER OF DEATH!*

EVEN IF I MUST *PERISH* TO STOP YOU, I *WILL*.

LEAVE ME... *LEAVE ME!* I... I MUST...

...REGAIN... CONTROL ...CONTROL...

...CONTROL...

RAVEN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHAT *HAPPENED?*

...WEAK... SO WEAK... SO DRAINED... I FEEL...

...SHATTERED.

HE IS GONE... TRIGON IS *GONE*. BUT--

--FOR HOW LONG...? *HOW LONG?*

WALLY WEST DASHES CLOSER TO THE WOMAN HE LOVES, AS RAVEN TREMBLES AT HIS TOUCH... THEN BURIES HER HEAD IN HIS ARMS.

MEANWHILE, THE WAR CONTINUES...

...BLOODY AND FILLED WITH DESTRUCTION.

THEN...

ENOUGH!

STOP! I COMMAND YOU TO STOP!

9

X'HAL? IS IT *POSSIBLE?*

THE FIGHTING WILL *CEASE*, X'HAL.

WHATEVER YOU COMMAND, WE WILL *DO*.

THE WAR IS OVER AND I WILL VOYAGE TO THE *CITADEL*.

LET NO MAN OR WOMAN ATTEMPT TO *STOP* ME.

NO! I WILL NOT *ALLOW* YOU TO LEAVE OKAARA.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW MANY *DIED* TRYING TO *SUBDUE* YOU?

I WILL NOT BE *STOPPED*, MY SON.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT *MADNESS* REIGNED WHEN LAST YOU LEFT THIS PLANET?

SHOULD I REMAIN, OKAARA WOULD BE *DESTROYED*.

THAT MUST NOT BE *ALLOWED*.

TRUST ME, AURON.

I DO WHAT *MUST* BE DONE.

AND I PRAY TO WHATEVER GODS A *GOD* SAYS PRAYERS TO--THAT I MAY *CONTROL* THE MADNESS THAT FESTERS WITHIN ME.

A SHIP *AWAITS!*

NO! ONLY *HERE* CAN YOUR POWERS BE *CONTAINED*...

WE *GO!*

10

MEANWHILE...

THERE. THAT IS THE CITADEL HOMEWORLD.

IF WE ARE TO PASS THE FORTRESS RINGS, I WILL NEED TO GIVE THE SPECIAL CODE.

WELL THEN, FANGS, GIVE IT--OR YOU'LL BE BLOWING YOUR NOSE OUTTA THE SIDE OF YOUR HEAD.

AND WITHIN THE ARMORED RINGS...

BRANX WARSHIP ON GRID 13, LEVEL 27, PATTERN-B.

ENTRANCE CODE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED.

THEY'RE LETTIN' US THROUGH.

I VALUE MY LIFE. I WILL DO AS YOU DEMAND.

BESIDES, I WISH TO SEE MY FAMILY AGAIN.

FURTHERMORE, I KNOW THAT EVEN IF YOU SAFELY LAND, YOU CANNOT HOPE TO SURVIVE.

YOU WILL MOST CERTAINLY BE DESTROYED.

WELL, HANDSOME, YOU PAYS YOUR MONEY AND YOU TAKES YOUR CHANCES.

GOTTA TELL YOU, ROBBIE, I DON'T LIKE THIS. I'M SCARED.

I DON'T FEEL IN CONTROL.

I DON'T BLAME YOU, VIC. IT'S ALL GOING A BIT TOO EASILY FOR ME.

JUST KEEP ON YOUR GUARD...

...AND HOPE WE CAN GET KORY OFF THIS LIVING ICEBOX BEFORE ANYONE GETS WISE TO US.

YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN?

NO, BUT SOMEONE'S GOT TO PLAY CHEERLEADER.

11

THOUGH BITTER COLD, THE OXYGEN LEVEL ON THE CYTADEL WORLD IS MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE. BREATHING IS DIFFICULT, BUT THE TITANS PLOD ONWARD...

PRISONERS TO SEE LORD DAMYN.

THEN MOVE ALONG, GORDANIAN.

YIPPEE. HE BOUGHT IT.

IF YOU WISH TO GET INSIDE, YOU WILL HAVE TO LISTEN TO MY EVERY WORD.

SURE THING, SWEETLIPS. BUT IF YOU SCREW UP EVEN A LITTLE BIT--

--THEY'LL BE ABLE TO AIR YOU OUT-- FROM THE INSIDE.

FOR TOUGHNESS, BOGIE HAS NOTHING ON ME.

THE GUARD OUTSIDE SETTLES BACK NOW THAT THE GORDANIAN AND HIS PRISONERS HAVE PASSED ON THROUGH.

HE WAITS FOR HIS CURRENT TOUR TO END.

THE COLD BOTHERS HIM, AND HE SHIVERS BENEATH HIS FUR DRESSINGS.

HE'D MUCH RATHER BE AT HOME, WITH HIS MATE AND YOUNG ONES, RESTING BEFORE A FIRE.

BUT HE HAS TWO MORE YEARS OF SERVICE BEFORE HIS OBLIGATIONS TO THE CITADEL ARE OVER.

THEN, HE HEARS A NOISE. BEGRUDGINGLY, HE INVESTIGATES...

SADLY, HE WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE IT... NOT EVER AGAIN.

CHONK!

...WISHING HE WERE BACK ON HIS TROPICAL WORLD. WELL, HE THINKS, HE'LL BE GIVEN A LEAVE SOON.

MEANWHILE...

HALT AND IDENTIFY!

THIS IS IT. NOW LISTEN TO ME.

PILOT ARMIAL BORNA-F'EN, THIRD-LEVEL OFFICER.

ARE THESE YOUR PRISONERS?

NO! THESE ARE OKAARAN SPIES. CAPTURE THEM!

NUTS! SOMEHOW I KNEW THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN.

12

ONE SIDE, BAT-BOY, THIS IS MY KINDA FIGHT.

HAD MY FINGER-LASER IN PLACE EVEN BEFORE WE LANDED.

ZWIPP!

SKRAKK!

ROB, BEHIND YOU. THERE'S ANOTHER ONE.

WATCH OUT!

ALREADY SAW IT, GAR...

... BUT THANKS--

--ANYWAY.

SKREEEK!

WELL, NOW WHAT?

THE REST SHOULD BE EASY. WE GOT THROUGH, DIDN'T WE?

SOMEHOW, PAL, I THINK IT'S GONNA GET WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER!

THAT'S ENCOURAGING. MAKES ME REALLY WANNA MOVE ON.

LOOK, WE GOTTA KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING, RIGHT? SO LET ME DO A LITTLE SCOUTING.

IT'S WHAT I DO BEST.

MAN, REALLY THOUGHT WE HAD IT MADE. THOUGHT MY TOUGH-GUY ACT HAD THAT ALIEN QUIVERING IN HIS BOOTIES.

I KEEP BLOWING IT, DON'T I?

BLAST!

13

DEEP BENEATH THE FORTRESS THE TITANS HAVE JUST ENTERED...

WELL, PSION, HAVE YOU BROKEN THROUGH MY SISTER'S *RESISTANCE*? OR DOES SHE CONTINUE TO *RESIST* YOUR TORTURES?

SHE IS RATHER AN *AMAZING* SPECIMEN, KOMAND'R.

PRINCESS KOMAND'R, PSION. DO NOT FORGET MY *TITLE*.

WHATEVER. THE TEMPERATURE WITHIN MY CHAMBER IS MORE THAN 200°

SHE SHOULD HAVE HAD HER FLESH *BURNED* AWAY BY NOW.

14

OOOOH, KORIAND'R AM REAL *TOUGH*, EH? MAYBE TOO *TOO* TOUGH. MAYBE WE SHOULD CUT HER OPEN AND SEE *WHY*, EH?

UHHH... OH, NO, LORD DAMYN. YOU GAVE HER TO ME FOR MY *PLEASURE*, REMEMBER?

BEFORE SHE DIES, I WANT TO SEE MY SISTER *BEG*.

SIBLING RIVALRY? PASSIONS CONTROL YOU, KOMAND'R. YOU SHOULD BE MORE LIKE US *PSIONS*.

WE LIVE ONLY TO SATISFY OUR SCIENTIFIC *CURIOSITY*. EMOTIONS ARE *MEANINGLESS*.

THEN YOU ARE THE *LOSER*, PSION.

YOU'LL NEVER KNOW THE ECSTATIC PLEASURE OF TRULY HUMILIATING AND *DESTROYING* YOUR FOE.

YOU WON'T GET THE *CHANCE* TO DESTROY HER, TAMARANIAN.

OOOH, LOOK! IT A *GIRL*. OR MAYBE IT A *SNAKE*. ONE OR THE OTHER, *ME* AM SURE.

I *RECOGNIZE* HER, LORD DAMYN.

SHE'S ONE OF PRIMUS' *REBELS*--THE ONE THEY CALL *DEMONIA*.

I *TRAVEL* WITH THOSE FOOLS, BUT I AM NOT *ONE* OF THEM!

LORD DAMYN, I PLEDGE MY ALLEGIANCE TO *THE CITADEL*.

OH, SHE *GOOD* ONE, SHE TERRIFIED BY ME BIGNESS AND ME CAN SURELY THREATEN HER. SHE OKAY. HEY, WANT *KISS*, HUH?

LORD DAMYN, SHE COULD BE A *SPY*. DON'T--

A *SPY*? YES, TAMARANIAN, BUT I *COULD* BE A SPY... FOR *YOU*.

THE OMEGA MEN CANNOT HOPE TO *WIN* THEIR WAR AGAINST YOU, AND DEMONIA DOES NOT SIDE WITH *LOSERS*.

FOR A PRICE, I WILL *WORK* FOR YOU.

AH. ME LIKES HOW SHE THINKS. SHE *GREEDY*. AND ME SURE KNOW HOW TO *HANDLE* GREEDY SLIME, SURE ME *DO*.

OKAY, LADY-SNAKE, WHAT DO YOU *WANT* FROM ME? AND REMEMBER, ME *NOT* VERY GENEROUS. YOU ASK *TOO MUCH*, ME BASH IN YOUR *BRAINS*.

THAT *TOO MUCH*. NOW ME BASH--

I WANT MY OWN *WORLD*, LORD DAMYN... TO RULE, IN *YOUR NAME*, OF COURSE.

LORD DAMYN. *GOOD NEWS*. WE CAPTURED X'HAL.

GOT X'HAL? WOW! THAT *GOOD*, SURE *GOOD*.

LET'S KILL TEN SLAVES FOR *CELEBRATION*, EH?

DON'T CELEBRATE *YET*, LORD DAMYN. SPIES HAVE ALREADY *INFILTRATED* YOUR CASTLE, EARTHLINGS SEARCHING FOR THIS ONE'S *SISTER*.

EARTHLINGS, HUH? *FIND* THEM, LADY-SNAKE, THEN ME WILL CRUSH THEIR LITTLE EARTHLING *SKULLS*.

15

AND SPEAKING OF THOSE SELFSAME TITANS...

JUST MORE *TUNNELS* AHEAD, GUYS. TUNNELS AND A FEW *GUARDS*.

WE NEED A *ROAD MAP*.

WHERE'S THE *AAA* WHEN YOU REALLY *WANT 'EM?*

I'D SUGGEST ASKING THOSE *GUARDS* DOWN THERE, BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE VERY *CO-OPERATIVE*.

OKAY, LET ME *THINK*...

...NEED ANOTHER *PLAN* IF WE'RE TO GET ANYWHERE.

PAL, TROUBLE WITH YOU IS YOU *THINK* TOO MUCH.

LEAVE THINGS UP TO *ME*.

WAIT, VIC... WE HAVE TO WORK THIS OUT THE RIGHT WAY.

BAT-BOY, YOU WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT *FINESSE*.

DON'T OWE RON *MUCH*, BUT I DID LEARN *ONE THING* WHILE RUNNIN' WITH HIS GANG--

--SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA LET YOUR *FIST* DO THE TALKIN'.

BAM!

NOW THEN, SHORT-PANTS-- YOU *WANT* INFO--

--YOU *GOT* IT!

16

OKAARA: A WORLD OF TUNNELS, CATACOMBS AND CAVERNS...

A WORLD ON WHICH THE REMAINING TITANS WAIT...

...I'M STILL *WORRIED* ABOUT YOU, RAVEN.

SO AM I, WALLACE. FOR A MOMENT I TRULY BELIEVED THE PART OF ME WHICH IS *TRIGON* WOULD BE *RELEASED*.

I AM AN *EMPATH*. I THRIVE ON THE EMOTIONS OF *OTHERS*...

...EMOTIONS WHICH ARE FOREVER *DENIED* ME--

--BUT I...I COULD NOT *ASSIMILATE* ALL THOSE EMOTIONS. THEY ATTACKED ME, HURT ME, MADE ME SO WEAK I WAS AFRAID MY *DARK SIDE* WOULD COME BURSTING THROUGH.

I JUST WANT YOU TO *UNDERSTAND*, RAVEN, THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT THIS *YOURSELF*. I'M HERE...

...I ALWAYS *WILL* BE.

I STILL *LOVE* YOU, RAVEN, PERHAPS *MORE* NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE, AND THE *HORRORS* YOU HAVE TO LIVE WITH.*

*AS REVEALED IN THE TITANS MINI-SERIES *2. -- Len.

I'M *SORRY*, PRIMUS, BUT I CAN'T *UNDERSTAND* YOU.

YOU *WORSHIP* X'HAL, YET SHE WOULD *DESTROY* YOU.

BECAUSE OF X'HAL, WE ALL *LIVE*. WHAT HAPPENED TO HER WAS BECAUSE SHE *SAVED* US. WE CANNOT *DISOBEY* HER.

IT STILL MAKES *NO SENSE*.

WE'RE HERE BECAUSE ONE OF OUR *FRIENDS* WAS BROUGHT TO THIS STAR-SYSTEM.

YOU PROMISED YOU'D HELP US *FIND* HER.

WE *NEED* YOUR HELP, PRIMUS, BUT EVEN IF YOU DON'T *GIVE* IT TO US WE HAVE TO FIND KORY.

WHAT'S IT GOING TO *BE*?

ARE YOU GOING TO HONOR YOUR *PROMISE*?

17

MEANWHILE...

BLAM

TWO DOWN!

THEY'RE GETTIN' *BIGGER* THE CLOSER WE GET TO *CENTRAL QUARTERS.*

NOT *BAD,* TINHEAD. I FORGET SOMETIMES YOU'VE GOT THE STRENGTH OF *TEN.*

YEAH, THAT'S 'CAUSE MY HEART IS *PURE.*

AN' IF YOU SAY PURE *WHAT*--I'LL WRAP YOU UP INTO A LITTLE GREEN *FUR-BALL.*

C'MON, I SEE SOMETHING I DEFINITELY DON'T *LIKE.*

THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE ON YOUR STUPID *JOKES.*

YOU'RE GETTIN' *TENSE,* ROBBIE.

YEAH? SO *WHAT?*

WORRIED ABOUT *KORY?*

OF COURSE. SHE'S A GOOD *FRIEND.*

THAT'S *ALL?*

VIC, MIND YOUR OWN *BUSINESS.*

LOOK, IT'S *X'HAL,* AND SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE *KORY.*

YOU DID *GOOD,* KOMAND'R, *REAL* GOOD. YOU GOT X'HAL.

AND ME NEVER COULD *DO* THAT.

SO TELL ME, NOW ME GOT *GODDESS,* WHAT ME GONNA *DO* WITH HER?

THAT, LORD DAMYN, IS *SIMPLE.* WE HOLD HER FOR *BLACKMAIL PURPOSES.*

AS LONG AS X'HAL IS HELD IN THAT *STASIS FIELD* YOUR PSION TRAITOR CREATED, SHE IS SAFE AND POWERLESS.

BUT, IF THE REBELS FAIL TO LAY DOWN THEIR WEAPONS AGAINST YOU, IF THEY REFUSE TO *ACKNOWLEDGE* YOU AS THEIR ONLY *LEADER*--

18

--THEN WE SIMPLY *RELEASE* THEIR GODDESS.

SHE WILL BE UNABLE TO *STOP* HERSELF EVEN AS SHE *DESTROYS* THOSE WHO WORSHIP HER.

EITHER WAY, WE *WIN*.

CRUSH THE REBELS!

DESTROY THE REBELS!

KILL THE REBELS!

"CRUSH! DESTROY! KILL!" THAT AM *MUSIC* TO ME EARS, SURE IS.

WE *LIKE* PLAN, KOMAND'R. THEN ME BE RULER OF *EVERYTHING*. NOT *BAD*, EH?

LORD DAMYN, PRINCESS KOMAND'R *ORDERED* HER SISTER BE BROUGHT BEFORE YOU.

HMMM. SHE LOOK *HALF DEAD*. REAL *PRETTY* GIRL, EH?

WONDER HOW SHE LOOK *FULL* DEAD?

SHE WOULD NOT *BREAK*, LORD DAYMN. HER RESISTANCE TO PAIN IS *INCREDIBLE*.

WELL, SHE SURE HAVE TO *SUFFER*. YOU KNOW SHE THE FIRST EVER TO *ESCAPE* FROM ME?

THAT CERTAINLY AM NOT *GOOD* THING TO DO, OH, *NO*.

VIC, GAR-- IT'S *KORY*!

SHE LOOKS *DEAD*.

WHAT HAVE THEY *DONE* TO HER?

VIC, YOU SAID BEFORE I *PLAN* TOO MUCH. WELL, I'M *NOT* DOING THAT NOW.

I WANT THOSE KILLERS!

AND I'M GOING TO GET THEM!

SKRAKK

WHEN DICK GRAYSON WAS YOUNG, HE WAS TAUGHT BY THE BATMAN ALL THE ARTS OF COMBAT--

---TODAY THOSE GRUELING LESSONS PROVE WELL-LEARNED.

INCREDIBLY AGILE, THE TEEN WONDER DARTS THROUGH A MAZE OF DEADLY LASERS, NOT ONE GRAZES HIM...

YET GORDANIAN SLAVER AND BRANX WARRIOR ARE NOT QUITE SO LUCKY.

ONE BY ONE, THEY FALL.

NOPE, YOU'RE NOT GETTING *AWAY*, PAL.

WHAT? YOU'RE NOT A *GORDANIAN?*

HEY, YOU'RE REAL *QUICK*, YOU KNOW THAT?

I GOT THEIR *BLASTER.*

KORY'S BREATHING. SHE'S STILL *ALIVE.*

WE'VE GOT TO GET HER *OUTTA* HERE.

NO, EARTHLING, YOU WILL NOT *REMOVE* MY SISTER...

...UNLESS YOU WISH ME TO *UNLEASH X'HAL* ON AN UNSUSPECTING GALAXY.

SORRY, SISTER, BUT *YOU* DON'T HOLD THE UPPER HAND.

GUESS WHAT'S *UGLY* AND GOT *REAL* PROBLEMS?

20

WE GO *FREE* OR SLUG-FACE HERE GETS A *SECOND NOSE*.

NO, *NO*. ME LIKE *ONE* NOSE LIKE ME *ALWAYS* HAD.

KOMAND'R, YOU *SAVE* ME, RIGHT? ME GIVE YOU *TWO* PLANETS, OKAY?

WELL, LADY, WHAT'S THE *WORD*?

DOES GRUESOME HERE *BUY THE FARM*?

AHHH. IT SEEMS THAT EVERYTHING IS UP TO *ME*, DOESN'T IT?

WE HAVE A RATHER INTEREST-ING *DILEMMA*.

NOW, WHAT SHOULD I *DO*?

KORY? CAN YOU *HEAR* ME, KORY?

D...DICK...?

TH-THEN I'M *DEAD*...? I... SAW YOU DIE IN SPACE...

RAVEN *SAVED* US. I'M *ALIVE*. WE *ALL* ARE.

OH, X'HAL ...X'HAL...

YOU'LL BE *ALL RIGHT*, HONEY... YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

HEY, IN CASE YOU DIDN'T *NOTICE*, WHILE YOU'RE PLAYING 'ROMEO AND JULIET', WE GOT REAL PROBLEMS.

UGLY, YOUR FRIEND SEEMS *RELUCTANT*. PERHAPS YOU CAN CONVINCE HER.

HEY, COME ON, KOMAND'R, BE *GOOD*, EH? ME *LIKE* YOU, REALLY.

SAY, ME MAKE YOU *GENERAL*. NOT *BAD*, EH?

YOU'LL MAKE ME A *GENERAL*? DAMYN, YOU ARE TRULY A *DOLT*.

WHY TAKE THE *TWIG* WHEN YOU CAN OWN THE WHOLE *TREE*?

NO!!

21

I DON'T *NEED* YOU ANY LONGER, DAMYN.

YOU ROSE TO POWER BY KILLING YOUR *PREDECESSOR*--

SKREEEEE

SKRAKKKKKK

--I SHALL DO THE *SAME*!

SHE *KILLED* HIM.!

UH, ROBBIE, GET KORY AND LET'S *SPLIT*.

I THINK IT'S ALL *GONNA HIT THE FAN* NOW.

AND *NOW*, MY FOOLISH FRIENDS, I DO BELIEVE YOUR BLUFF HAS BEEN *CALLED*.

AND THOUGH I THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE CHANCE TO *RID* OUR GALAXY OF THAT STUPID *BUFFOON*--

--MY GRATITUDE SHALL NOT LESSEN MY DESIRE TO SEE YOU ALL *DIE*.

BUT *FIRST*-- THE CITADEL HAS A *NEW RULER*!

KOMAND'R THE FIRST! LORD OF LORDS!

RULER OF ALL I SURVEY!

22

LOOK, YOU GOT THE *POWER* YOU WANT, YOU DON'T NEED *KORIAND'R*.

LET US *TAKE* HER AND GO BACK TO *EARTH*.

LET YOU *GO*? EARTHLING, IS THAT YOUR *SENSE OF HUMOR*?

CAREFUL. SHE'S CRAZY.

KORY ISN'T A *THREAT* ANY LONGER. YOU'VE *GOT* EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER WANTED.

YOU'VE GOT A *GALAXY* TO RULE. YOU'VE GOT ALL THE *POWER* YOU NEED.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO *WORRY* ABOUT YOUR SISTER ANY LONGER.

WORRY ABOUT DEAR, SWEET KORIAND'R? I NEVER *HAVE*.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN HER *BETTER*, DESPITE WHAT OUR DEAR *PARENTS* MAY HAVE THOUGHT.

NOW, I COULD BE *BENEFICENT* AND LET YOU ALL GO FREE, BUT I WOULD BE A *FOOL* TO DO THAT.

THE WARLORDS OF OKAARA ALWAYS SAID TO *DESTROY* YOUR ENEMIES LEST THEY RISE AGAIN TO DESTROY *YOU*.

AND SO I *SHALL*...

...BUT FIRST SHE SHALL LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO SEE ME KILL HER PARENTS AND DESTROY HER PRECIOUS PLANET, *TAMARÁN*.

NO! I WON'T *LET* YOU, KOMAND'R.

I WON'T LET YOU!

EVEN IF I HAVE TO KILL YOU TO STOP YOU!

23

THIS IS JUST THE *BEGINNING!* JUST WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE OUR HEART STUNNING CLIMAX IN --

THE NEW TEEN TITANS ANNUAL #1! *DOUBLE-SIZED DYNAMITE FROM THE NEW DC!*

NEXT ISSUE: BE HERE FOR MORE THRILLS AS ONLY **DC** *CAN GIVE 'EM!*

DC

ANNUAL

1982

NO. 1

THE NEW TEEN TITANS®

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY



THEY ARE THE *BEST* THERE IS: *THE CHANGELING*, SHAPE-SHIFTER SUPREME; *CYBORG*, HALF MAN/HALF ROBOT; *KID FLASH*, SUPER-SPEEDSTER; *RAVEN*, MISTRESS OF MAGIC; *ROBIN*, THE TEEN WONDER; *STARFIRE*, ALIEN POWERHOUSE; AND *WONDER GIRL*, THE AMAZING AMAZON! TOGETHER THEY ARE...

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

MARV WOLFMAN + GEORGE PÉREZ — WRITER-- CO-PLOTTERS -- ARTIST / ROMEO TANGHAL — EMBELLISHER / BEN ODA - LETTERER / CARL GAFFORD - COLORIST / LEN WEIN — EDITOR

FINAL CONFLICT!

YOU HAVE *HUMILIATED* ME. YOU HAVE *TORTURED* ME. YOU HAVE DONE EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER TO *DESTROY* ME.

BUT YOU *FAILED.*

NOW, KOMAND'R, NOW I AM GOING TO *KILL YOU!!*

AND NOTHING IS GOING TO STOP ME!!

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

ROBBIE, YOU GOTTA *DO* SOMETHING.

KORY'S OUT FOR *BLOOD!*

THIS *PASSED* BEING A FIGHT LONG AGO. WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A FULL-SCALE *WAR*--

--AND IN WARS, PEOPLE GET *HURT.*

NO. KORY'S ON *HER OWN.* WE *ALL* ARE, AND MAY GOD FORGIVE US FOR DOING WHAT *MUST* BE DONE!

SHE'LL *KILL* HER SISTER IF SHE CAN. BUT, FOR ONCE, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN *STOP* HER...

...AND I'M NOT REALLY CERTAIN I SHOULD.

BEEN IN FIGHTS *BEFORE,* BUT NEVER NOTHIN' LIKE *THIS.*

THESE THINGS AREN'T EVEN *HUMAN,* AND I'M FIGHTIN' ON WORLDS NOT EVEN MY *DAD* DREAMED EXISTED.

HELL, DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS REAL OR A DREAM OR A *NIGHTMARE...*

...BUT IF I DON'T KEEP *FIGHTIN',* I'LL NEVER WAKE UP TO *FIND OUT.*

2

3

GUYS, MEBBE I GOT *EIGHT* ARMS, BUT I REALLY NEED A COUPLE *MORE*.

PLEASE, GUYS? GIVE YOUR OLD BUDDY CHANGELING SOME *HELP!*

COME ON, KOMAND'R... YOU'VE BEEN ATTACKING ME FOR *DAYS*.

YOU'VE BEEN SWEARING THAT YOU'RE SO MUCH *BETTER* THAN I AM.

SKREEEE

LET'S SEE YOU *PROVE* IT, SISTER.

GOD, MY MUSCLES ACHE, BUT I CAN'T *STOP*... CAN'T EVEN *REST*.

GOT TO DO WHAT THE BATMAN ALWAYS TOLD ME... *IGNORE* THE PAIN, FORGET THE INJURIES... JUST KEEP MOVING AHEAD...

WHUMP!

... ALWAYS PUSH ON AND ON AND *ON!*

I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT. IT LOOKSSS LIKE THEY MIGHT ACTUALLY *FREE* THAT DAMN GODDESSSS, X'HAL.

BUT WHERE WOULD THAT LEAVE *ME?*

THE OMEGA MEN *HATE* ME. EVEN HARPISSS, MY SSSISTER, WOULD DEMAND MY DEATH...

... *IF* THEY KNEW THAT DEMONIA HAD TURNED *TRAITOR*, WHICH THEY DO NOT.

YESSS, YESSS, THERE ISSS A WAY TO TURN THIS SSSETBACK TO MY *ADVANTAGE*.

DEMONIA WILL SSSTILL COME UP ON *TOP!*

COMIN' AT ME FROM ALL SIDES. NO WAY TO *TURN* IF I WAS TRYIN' TO GET AWAY -- BUT I'M *NOT*.

THESE KILLERS DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH *STRENGTH* MY DAD BUILT INTO MY CYBORG ARMOR.

4

SKRASSHH!

GOT ALMOST *TOO MUCH* STRENGTH, AND SOMETIMES THAT *SCARES* THE HELL OUTTA ME.

COULD CRUSH A *SKULL* IN MY HANDS WITHOUT EVEN HALF TRYIN'. CRUSH IT JUST AS EASILY AS I CAN BRING DOWN THIS BLASTED *WALL!*

SO NOW THIS *ALIEN* BITES IT. OKAY, HE *ASKED* FOR IT.

BUT WHAT HAPPENS BACK ON *EARTH?*

WHAT HAPPENS IF I SCREW UP AT *HOME?*

WE'RE DEFINITELY *OUTNUMBERED* AND CERTAINLY *OUTPOWERED.*

EVEN VIC'S *STRENGTH* ISN'T ENOUGH TO TURN THE TIDE.

BUT THESE *GAS GRENADES* MIGHT BUY ME A FEW PRECIOUS SECONDS -- *THERE!*

GOT THIS WARRIOR'S *BLASTING ROD!*

ONE BLASTER DOESN'T EVEN UP THE SIDES, BUT IT SHOULD *HELP...*

...I HOPE.

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO TRUST THOSE CITADEL *INFERIORS* TO SUBDUE ANY REBELLION.

HOW THEY HAVE MANAGED TO *CONTROL* THIS GALAXY IS BEYOND ME. BUT--

GENERAL ALERT! WE ARE UNDER ATTACK!

ASSISTANCE IS DEMANDED AT ONCE! ALL PERSONNEL MOVE TO BATTLE STATIONS!

HURRY, GORDANIAN. WE HAVE *OUR ORDERS.*

ORDERS? THAT CAME FROM THE *PSION* TRAITOR. I DO NOT *LISTEN* TO HIS KIND.

HE HAS OFFICIAL SANCTION. I WILL *OBEY* HIS WORD.

ONLY YOU BRANX WARRIORS MINDLESSLY FOLLOW ORDERS. GORDANIAN SLAVERS ARE TRAINED TO *THINK.*

5

SHE FIGHTS LIKE A DAMNED *HELLION*, NEVER GIVING ME A MOMENT TO *BREATHE*, LET ALONE RECOUP MY *STRENGTH*.

I'VE SPENT FAR TOO MUCH TIME HONING MY *STARBOLT POWERS* AND NOT ENOUGH ON MY *PHYSICAL* STRENGTH.

I NEED *TIME*, EVEN A FEW MOMENTS... AND I KNOW HOW TO *GAIN* THOSE PRECIOUS SECONDS.

MY FOOLISH SISTER IS A *COMPASSIONATE* DOLT. I CAN APPEAL TO HER *FAMILY INSTINCTS*...

SPRAKABAM!

...CONFUSE HER, TOY WITH HER, AND WHEN HER DEFENSES ARE DOWN, *ATTACK HER!*

I'LL *DESTROY* THAT IGNORANT DOG BEFORE SHE KNOWS WHAT *HAPPENED*.

LISTEN TO ME, SISTER, LET US *TALK!*

NO! I AM *THROUGH* TALKING.

TIME AFTER TIME YOU TAUNTED ME AS TO HOW MY *COMPASSION* WAS MY *UNDOING*.

WELL, KOMAND'R, PERHAPS YOU HAVE FINALLY *SUCCEEDED* IN TEACHING ME.

THE TIME FOR TALK IS LONG *OVER*. I'LL ONLY BE SATISFIED WITH YOUR *DEATH!*

THAT AND *NOTHING LESS!*

6

SHE *MEANS* IT. SHE'LL KEEP FIGHTING UNTIL SHE BREAKS THROUGH MY DEFENSES.

NO! I CANNOT LET THAT HAPPEN. ALL MY LIFE KORIAND'R WAS HAILED AS THE GREATEST, AS THE *IDEAL*.

SHE RECEIVED ACCESS TO THE *THRONE* WHEN THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO *ME*.

SKRAAK

BUT NOW, AT LAST, I WILL PROVE WHO IS THE *TRUE* PRINCESS OF TAMARAN!

WHAT IS *WRONG* WITH YOU, KOMAND'R? I THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE *POWERFUL* THAN THIS?

I THOUGHT A SINGLE BLAST COULD *DISINTEGRATE* ME.

HAVE YOU GOTTEN *SOFT* IN YOUR COMPLACENCY?

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

WELL, *I* HAVEN'T, SISTER. I'VE BEEN *TRAINING*.

AND I'VE BEEN *AWAITING* THIS DAY. ALL MY LIFE YOU ATTACKED ME AND HURT ME. BUT NOW THAT WILL *CHANGE*!

WILL IT, LITTLE SISTER?

YOU *TALK* INSTEAD OF FIGHT. AND THAT WILL PROVE YOUR *DOOM*!

KRAKK

HER BODY ACHING WITH PAIN, DEEP CUTS SCARRING HER GOLDEN FLESH, PRINCESS KORIAND'R **FALLS**. DESPERATELY, SHE TRIES TO RISE, BUT HER DAMAGED LEGS STIFFEN. SHE STARES UPWARD BUT ALL SHE SEES IS KOMAND'R'S LEERING FACE. THEN, SUDDENLY, SHE FEELS INTENSE HEAT AS A CRIMSON STARBOLT SEEMINGLY EXPLODES WITHIN HER.

MEANWHILE, THE FIRST BATTALION OF BRANX WARRIORS ARRIVES, ANXIOUS FOR THE **BATTLE** TO COME.

THEY RECEIVE THEIR NOURISHMENT AND STRENGTH FROM THE DEATH OF **OTHERS**. THEY ARE THE IDEAL WARRIORS.

THEY LIVE ONLY TO **KILL**!

DOESN'T MATTER HOW **HARD** I TRY, THEY KEEP COMING -- AND I'M ALREADY SO TERRIBLY **TIRED**.

HAVEN'T **SLEPT** FOR DAYS, NOT SINCE KORIAND'R WAS **KIDNAPPED**.

SPRAKK!

DICK? MY GOD, HE'S BEEN **HIT**!

HOLD ON, BUDDY -- I'M **COMING**!

DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH SHE **MEANT** TO ME.

FIGHTING ONLY FROM **REFLEX** NOW, SWINGING, DON'T EVEN **CARE** WHAT I DO...

...JUST KEEP **HITTING**... JUST KEEP --

ARGHHH!

SPAOAOAMMM!

POWERFUL HYDRAULICS CARRY CYBORG ACROSS THE DISTANCE IN MERE SECONDS, BUT...

SPAOA

OAMM!

HELL! FELT THAT ALL THE WAY THROUGH MY ARMOR!

PTAK!

AND NOW IT HURTS TRYING TO LIFT MY ARM. HURTS TRYING TO THROW A PUNCH.

WHOLE SYSTEM'S SHUTTING OFF WHILE IT GOES INTO AUTOMATIC REPAIR.

BUT I CAN'T GO UNDER... CAN'T LET THE OTHERS DOWN...

DAMN IT, I'M A TITAN! AND IF THAT MEANS ANYTHIN', THEN I GOTTA KEEP FIGHTIN'!

GOTTA KEEP GOING!

POOM!

ROBBIE'S DOWN. VIC'S BEEN HIT. THAT MEANS IT'S UP TO ME!

NO TIME FOR ANY SELF-PITY, NO TIME TO WONDER IF I CAN DO IT. I'VE GOT NO CHOICE NOW.

THEY'RE ALL RELYING ON ME!

KRASH!

KILL HIM! KILL THE EARTHLING!

OH, NO... CAN'T RUN! TOO LATE!

SKRAAK!

HE'S GONE, TOTALLY DISINTEGRATED!

GETTIN' IT ON *ALL* SIDES NOW...

...AND THE PAIN'S *UNBEARABLE!*

NO WAY OUT, THIS IS *IT!*

SPOOM!

ONLY THIS IS THE SCUM THAT KILLED *GAR.*

BEFORE I FALL, HE'S GONNA--

ARGHH!

SKKRROOOOOMM!

THE SSSTUPID EARTHLING *FAILED,* BUT THAT SSSTILL DOESN'T *CHANGE* THINGSSS FOR ME.

THE PSION WOULD HAVE ME *KILLED.* HE'D TRUST ME LESSS THAN I WOULD HIM.

UNLESSS I ACT TO SSSAVE MYSELF *FIRST.*

AND THERE *ISSS* A WAY... THERE MOST CERTAINLY ISSS.

YOU ARE THE REMAINING HEADS OF THE CITADEL COUNCIL. *LISTEN* TO ME.

PLACE *ME* IN CHARGE OF THIS BATTLE AND I WILL NOT ONLY *END* THIS FRUITLESS WAR--

--BUT *ASSURE* CITADEL VICTORY FOREVER!

MEANWHILE...

SPLOOOSHH!

KORIAND'R'S BARELY *CONSCIOUS.* THEN... I'YE *WON!*

I'M AS SUPERIOR AS I ALWAYS *SAID* I WAS--

WHAT? SHE *STIRS?* THEN I'D BEST MOVE QUICKLY, OR--

BUT, AS KOMAND'R STEPS FORWARD, KORIAND'R RISES, ALTHOUGH WITH GREAT UNCERTAINTY.

SHE CAN BARELY FOCUS HER EYES, YET SHE KNOWS WHAT MUST BE DONE...

BUT...

CEASE ALL FIGHTING!

A FORCE-FIELD? WHO *DARES?*

YOU? PSION, WHAT GIVES *YOU* THE RIGHT TO--?

SILENCE, KOMAND'R, YOU ARE *NOT* CITADEL LEADER EVEN IF YOU DID *SLAY* LORD DAMYN.

I HAVE BEEN GRANTED CONTROL OF THIS ENTERPRISE. YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME OR *FORFEIT* YOUR CLAIM.

ARE YOU READY TO HEAR MY *OFFER,* KOMAND'R? OR ARE YOU READY TO *DIE?*

NO *PSION* IS GOING TO ORD--

SILENCE! I TOLD YOU BEFORE -- *EMOTIONS* ILL BECOME YOU.

BUT, IF YOU *LISTEN*, YOUR WISHES MAY YET BE *GRANTED*.

THE CITADEL COUNCIL WILL NOT *ACCEPT* YOU AS THEIR LEADER ...

...BUT I PROPOSED A SOLUTION OF INTEREST TO *BOTH* OF YOU.

A FIGHT TO THE *DEATH*... ON YOUR HOMEWORLD, *TAMARAN*.

BE *VICTORIOUS*, KOMAND'R, AND LEADERSHIP IS *YOURS*.

AND SHOULD *YOU* SLAY KOMAND'R, THEN YOU AND TAMARAN SHALL BE *SPARED*.

A BATTLE OF WILLS BETWEEN HATED ENEMIES. A FIGHT *BROADCAST* TO ALL VEGAN WORLDS.

THE STAKES... *POWER*...

...AND *SURVIVAL*.

AND THE CITADEL SHALL EITHER GAIN A NEW LEADER OR *APPOINT* ONE FROM WITHIN.

WELL, WHAT DO YOU *SAY*?

WILL YOU FIGHT?

12

KORIAND'R SQUIRMS. SHE DOES NOT **LIKE** HER CHOICE AND YET SHE CANNOT AVOID THE PSION'S TERMS. ALSO, SHE IS UNEASY BECAUSE SHE FEARS THE QUESTIONABLE OUTCOME OF BATTLE. ANGRILY, KOMAND'R **GLARES** AT THE SEEMINGLY EMOTIONLESS PSION. INWARDLY, HE ALLOWS HIMSELF A SELF-SATISFIED SMILE. WHATEVER THE CHOICE, **HE** SHALL WIN!

DEEP SPACE, A SHORT DISTANCE OUT FROM THE PLANET OKAARA...

"I PROMISED YOU, WONDER GIRL, THAT I WOULD AID IN RESCUING PRINCESS KORIAND'R...

"...NOW I PLEDGE THE FULL POWER OF THE OMEGA MEN TO YOUR MISSION."

"THANK YOU, PRIMUS, BUT I'M FORCED TO WONDER--"

--ARE YOU HELPING US BECAUSE YOU *WANT* TO...

...OR BECAUSE THE CITADEL KIDNAPPED YOUR GODDESS X'HAL AS THEY DID OUR TEAMMATE?

WHATEVER MY REASONS, THE RESULTS REMAIN THE *SAME*.

13

X'HAL MEANS *EVERYTHING* TO US. SHE *MUST* BE RETURNED TO OKAARA.

BUT YOU SAY YOU *FEAR* HER POWERS. FRANKLY, PRIMUS, I DON'T *UNDERSTAND* YOU.

YOU KNOW, KORY USED TO *CALL* UPON X'HAL EVEN AS MY *SISTER* CALLS UPON THE AMAZON GODS.

BUT ALWAYS *IMPLICIT IN* HER CALL WAS A CRY FOR *VENGEANCE*.

WHAT *IS* X'HAL? WHAT DOES SHE *MEAN* TO YOUR PEOPLE?

SHE WAS OUR *SAVIOR*. SHE IS OUR *GODDESS*. AND SHE IS *MORE*.

X'HAL IS BOTH THE EMBODIMENT OF ALL THAT CAN BE *GOOD*, AND ALL THAT CAN BE *CORRUPTED*.

SHE FLUCTUATES BETWEEN THESE TWO EXTREMES AND THERE IS NO WAY TO *PREDICT* HER SHIFTS...

...OR EVEN FOR HER TO *CONTROL* THEM.

"IT BEGAN SO LONG AGO, AND SOME OF WHAT I WILL TELL YOU HAS ALREADY BECOME THE STUFF OF LEGENDS UPON WHICH EVEN X'HAL HERSELF CANNOT SHED LIGHT.

"X'HAL WAS, PERHAPS, OUR GREATEST WARRIOR, AND SHE LED OUR FORCES INTO BATTLE AGAINST THE PSION HORDES.

14

"HER BRILLIANT MIND CREATED BATTLE PLANS WHICH REPELLED THE PSIONS, DESPITE THEIR OVERPOWERING MIGHT.

"OUR GALAXY WAS FREED AND THE ENEMY DRIVEN OFF. THE PSIONS EVENTUALLY FOUNDED A PLANET ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE...

"...BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM WAS BEYOND OUR CARING.

"X'HAL WAS OUR SAVIOR AND SHE WAS HAILED BY ALL 25 VEGAN WORLDS.

"UNANIMOUSLY, SHE WAS DECLARED OUR FIRST HIGH EMPRESS."

PRIMUS IS ENAMORED WITH X'HAL'S LEGEND. PERHAPS I SHOULD CONTINUE WITH A LESS GLORIFIED VERSION.

YES, X'HAL WAS OUR RULER -- AND AN EXCELLENT ONE, TOO.

SHE INSTITUTED MANY REFORMS AND BEGAN AN ERA OF PEACE THAT WAS UNBROKEN FOR MANY YEARS.

BUT EVENTUALLY IT DID COME TO AN END. IN HER QUEST FOR A FREE GALAXY SHE HAD IGNORED OUR DEFENSE. THE PSIONS RETURNED TO WAGE ANOTHER WAR.

"DURING THEIR FIRST ASSAULT THEY DESTROYED THE MOON AROUND WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE CITADEL HOMEWORLD...

"AND DURING THAT SAME ATTACK, THEY BROKE THROUGH ALL OUR MAKESHIFT BARRIERS...

"...BATTLED THEIR WAY INTO OUR CAPITAL...

"...AND KILLED X'HAL!"

"STILL, WITH THE PSIONS, DEATH WAS NO DETERRENT. THEY ARE A DEADLY AND COLD-BLOODED RACE.

"IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE, WHICH THEY WORSHIP, ANY ATROCITY WAS PERMISSIBLE.

"AND SO THEY BEGAN TO TEST X'HAL'S LIFELESS BODY. SHE WAS BOMBARDED WITH INCALCULABLE RADIATIONS.

"HER BRAIN WAS REMOVED, ITS CORTEX EXAMINED.

"WITH CALLOUS DISREGARD FOR THE SANCTITY OF HER SOUL THEY CONVERTED HER BODY-MASS INTO PURE ENERGY.

"X'HAL'S BODY FAIRLY EXPLODED WITH THE FURY OF A STAR CAUGHT IN ITS DEATH-THROES.

"AND WHEN THEY WERE DONE WITH HER, SHE WAS PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN...

"...IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR MOST VILE EXPERIMENT YET.

"IN TRYING TO DESTROY X'HAL, THEY HAD SIMPLY DESTROYED THEIR OWN LABORATORY WORLD.

"BUT X'HAL DID NOT DIE A SECOND DEATH.

16

"SOMEHOW SHE HAD BEEN REBORN, CONVERTED TO PURE ENERGY WHICH SHE COULD CONTROL TO AGAIN TAKE ON HUMAN SHAPE.

"BUT SHE HAD BEEN CHANGED. ONCE SHE FOUGHT FROM NECESSITY. NOW SHE BATTLED OUT OF LUST FOR DESTRUCTION!

"THE ATTACKING PSION FLEET WAS INSTANTLY OBLITERATED..."

...AND THEN SHE TURNED ON HER *OWN* PEOPLE.

KALISTA, PLEASE REMEMBER, SHE WAS NOT *RESPONSIBLE* FOR WHAT SHE DID.

"YES, PROPELLED BY HER NEW BATTLE-LUST, SHE RETURNED TO VEGA...

"AND WHERE SHE ONCE **SAVED** OUR PLANETARY SYSTEM, SHE PROCEEDED TO **DESTROY** IT. THREE WORLDS CEASED TO EXIST."

BUT SHE WOULD HAVE *STOPPED* HERSELF IF SHE COULD. SHE WOULD HAVE *DESTROYED* HERSELF BEFORE SHE SLEW HER CHILDREN. BUT THE VEGAN PLANETS COULD NOT *ALLOW* THEMSELVES TO BE DESTROYED, AND SO THEY BROUGHT TOGETHER THE *GREATEST WARRIORS* FROM ALL OUR WORLDS.

"AND THOUGH MORE THAN **TWO HUNDRED** OF THEM DIED IN THE ATTEMPT, THEY CAPTURED X'HAL'S LIFE-ESSENCE."

THEY TOOK X'HAL TO A WORLD WHICH HAD BEEN *DEAD*. THAT WAS *OKAARA*, AND THOSE WARRIORS BECAME THE *OKAARAN WARLORDS*. THEIR LIVES WERE NOW DEDICATED TO *CONTROLLING* X'HAL'S POWER, TO KEEPING HER *CONTAINED*, AND TO THE TRAINING OF ALL *FUTURE* VEGANS IN THE DEFENSE OF THEIR WORLDS.

OUR STAR-SYSTEM WAS *SAFE*, AND X'HAL CAME TO BE *WORSHIPPED* ONCE AGAIN.

BUT HER DEEDS INSPIRED BOTH AWE AND *FEAR*.

HAS ANYONE SEEN *DEMONIA*? SHE SHOULD HAVE *RELIEVED* ME BY NOW.

DAMN HER TRAITRESS HIDE. WHAT HAS *HAPPENED* TO HER?

PRIMUS, WE ARE ENTERING *HOMEWARD SPACE*.

WE SHOULD BE APPROACHING THEIR *RINGED FORTRESS* IN NINE MINUTES.

THE FORTRESS IS *IMPENETRABLE*. HOW WILL WE GET *THROUGH*?

GOOD. WE'RE ALMOST *THERE*.

I'M *TIRED* OF THIS DELAY.

AND I HAVE TO KNOW IF KORY'S STILL *ALIVE*.

BECAUSE, IF SHE *ISN'T*, I SWEAR THERE'S GOING TO BE *HELL* TO PAY!

OUR EARTH-FRIENDS ARE OUR *KEY*! TRUST ME, HARPIS.

18

TAMARAN: EIGHTH PLANET FROM THE STAR VEGA, AND HOME TO KORIAND'R, ITS CROWN PRINCESS. A HOME SHE HAS NOT SET FOOT UPON FOR MORE THAN SIX YEARS...

YOU HAVE ACCEPTED *TRIAL BY COMBAT*. NOW YOU, AND THE INHABITANTS OF VEGA'S 22 PLANETS AND OUTPOSTS, SHALL HEAR THE *RULES*.

THIS SHALL BE A CONTEST OF *PHYSICAL PROWESS*. YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO USE YOUR STARBOLT POWERS.

THE PSION CHUCKLES. HE KNOWS KOMAND'R CANNOT BE LONG RESTRAINED.

OF COURSE, PSION. NOW LET US *GET ON* WITH IT.

VICTORY IS ACHIEVED ONLY WHEN ONE IS *DEAD*. IS THAT *UNDERSTOOD*?

I'M *READY*.

EXCELLENT. VICTORY WILL BE *DIFFICULT*. YOU ARE EVENLY MATCHED IN STRENGTH.

SUCCESS WILL BE DETERMINED BASED ON *SKILL* ALONE.

OOOH. ME SURE BET *KORIAND'R* WIN. BET YOU THE RIGHT TO KILL ME *WIFE*. WHAT YOU *SAY*, DIMM?

KILL *WIFE*? SOUNDS GOOD TO *ME*. SURE, ME TAKE *KOMAND'R*.

YES, KOMAND'R MORE *ROTTEN*, SURE IS. SHE *ENJOY* TO KILL SISTER.

"*KORIAND'R*, HOWEVER, DOES NOT HAVE HER SISTER'S TASTE FOR MURDER.

"*IT SHALL PROVE QUITE AN ... ENTERTAINING MATCH.*

"*THE CONTEST BEGINS--NOW!*"

WELL, LITTLE SISTER, IT FINALLY COMES DOWN TO *THIS*, DOES IT?

BUT YOU WERE NEVER MY *EQUAL*, KORIAND'R. NOW, I WILL *PROVE* THAT!

NEVER!

WELL, I FOR ONE AM *UNCERTAIN* AS TO THE OUTCOME. KOMAND'R DOES NOT HAVE HER SISTER'S *PHYSICAL TRAINING*, BUT SHE IS *CRAFTY*.

20

I FIGHT FOR THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY YOU *DISGRACED* WITH YOUR TRAITRESS WAYS.

ONCE I *SLAY* YOU, OF ALL OUR FAMILY LINE, ONLY *I* WILL REMAIN.

OUR PARENTS ARE *DEAD*, KORIAND'R -- *DEAD*! YOU FIGHT FOR *GHOSTS*!

THEN YOU FIGHT FOR *LOST CAUSES*, LITTLE SISTER.

NO! YOU *LIE*, KOMAND'R.

I - I CAN'T *BELIEVE* YOU. IT ISN'T *TRUE*!

TELL ME THEY'RE STILL ALIVE! *TELL* ME, KOMAND'R.

TELL ME, OR--

OR *WHAT*, FOOLISH LITTLE SISTER?

THEY ARE *DEAD*, SLAIN BY OUR DEAR *BROTHER* THREE DAYS AFTER YOU WERE TAKEN FROM THEM.

HE WENT BERSERK, *MURDERED* THEM. NOW HE IS A HUNTED *FUGITIVE*.

WHY *FIGHT*, KORIAND'R? GIVE UP! JOIN YOUR PARENTS IN THAT GREAT GRAY *NETHERVERSE*.

YOU HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO FIGHT *FOR*!

NO! I... I HAVE TO FIGHT... I *HAVE* TO...

21

WHY, KORIAND'R? THERE IS NOTHING TO *LIVE* FOR.

YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO *EARTH*.

YOU HAVE *NOTHING* HERE!

YOU MAY AS WELL *GIVE UP*, LITTLE SISTER.

YOU'RE ALL *ALONE*.

BUT YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO DIE, LITTLE SISTER. BEG FOR MERCY, AND PERHAPS I SHALL *GRANT* IT.

ADMIT TO EVERYONE THAT I AM YOUR *BETTER* AND ONCE I AM LORD OVER ALL, I'LL SIMPLY SEND YOU INTO *EXILE*.

ADMIT YOUR WEAKNESS, KORIAND'R. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE!!

NO! I'D SOONER BE DRAGGED BY THE LIMBS OVER OKAARA'S ROCKY SURFACE THAN BOW IN SHAME TO *YOU*.

YOU'VE SPENT YOUR LIFE TRYING TO *HURT* ME.

YOU TURNED ME FROM A PERSON BRIMMING WITH *LOVE* INTO ONE WHO LEARNED TO *HATE*.

IT WAS YOUR YILE FACE WHICH KEPT ME ALIVE IN TIMES WHEN DEATH WOULD HAVE BEEN A WELCOME *RELIEF*.

I *CANNOT* DIE, SISTER-- NOT UNTIL I KNOW *YOU ARE DEAD!*

22

HMMM. SURE HOPE *KORIAND'R* WINS! ME WOULDN'T WANT THAT *KOMAND'R* WITCH TO RULE CITADEL.

OHHH? YOU *RIG* FIGHT, EH? THAT *GOOD*, GREEN ONE. *REAL* GOOD.

OH, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT *THAT*, MY FRIEND.

I DOUBT YOU'LL LONG THNK *THAT*, MY MUSCLE-MINDED LOUT.

THIS BATTLE EXISTS FOR *ONE* REASON ONLY. WITH ALL VEGAN EYES WATCHING THEIR FIGHTING...

...*MY* PSION FORCES ARE PLANTING *EXPLOSIVES* THROUGHOUT YOUR FABLED EMPIRE!

AT THE MOMENT THIS BATTLE IS *OVER*, NO MATTER *WHO* WINS, THOSE EXPLOSIVES WILL *DESTROY* EVERY CITADEL FORTRESS.

"AND THEN THE PSION EMPIRE SHALL RETURN IN TRIUMPH!"

YOU TOLD ME ABOUT OUR PARENTS TO *DEMORALIZE* ME, DIDN'T YOU, KOMAND'R? WELL, IT DIDN'T *WORK*, SISTER.

THEIR DEATHS ONLY SPUR ME ON TO GREATER *GLORIES*.

BUT, I'M *DISAPPOINTED* IN YOU, SISTER. IN MY NIGHTMARES I'VE FOUGHT THIS BATTLE A *THOUSAND* TIMES...

...BUT I ALWAYS SAW YOU AS SOME TERRIBLE *WAR MACHINE*, SO HORRIBLY *POWERFUL*.

BUT, IN TRUTH, YOU'RE *NOT* POWERFUL. YOU'RE WEAK! YOU'RE *SPINELESS*!

AND NOW I *LAUGH* AT HAVING THOUGHT THAT YOU WERE *BETTER* THAN I!

23

AGHHHH!

NOBODY LAUGHS AT ME!

NOBODY!!

YOU *ALWAYS* FOUGHT BY THE RULES, DIDN'T YOU, MY STUPID SISTER?

THAT IS WHY YOU COULD NEVER *WIN* AGAINST ME.

HOLD STILL, DAMN YOU. STOP *SQUIRMING!* LET MY STARBOLT POWERS *FRY* YOU FROM WITHIN!

OH, I SWEAR YOU SHALL *RUE* THE DAY YOU DARED LAUGH AT -- *WHAT?!?*

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

STOP IT, KORIAND'R! STOP IT!

YOU *KNOW* I CANNOT FLY!

SHE'S CRAZED, WILLING TO KILL US *BOTH*, UNLESS --

X'HAL'S BLOOD! SHE'LL CRUSH US INTO THE MOUNTAIN...

BLACK FIRE BURNS OUTWARD FROM KOMAND'R'S FINGERTIPS, CUTTING THROUGH EARTH AND STONE...

WHILE FAR OFF IN SPACE, HIGH ABOVE THE HOMEWORLD, BRANX SECOND-LEVEL WARRIOR SEMLGH CORH-O'HN CASUALLY GLANCES AT HIS VIEWER, FULLY EXPECTING TO SEE NOTHING EVENTFUL.

NO ONE, NOT EVEN THE **PSIONS**, HAS SUCCESSFULLY BREACHED THE RINGED FORTRESS.

NO, THIS MONITOR JOB IS AN **EASY** ONE, HE THINKS.

BUT...

WHAT? ATTACK! ATTACK ON ALL FRONTS!

BATTLE STATIONS!

AS ALL HANDS RACE TO THEIR POSITIONS, SEMLGH FEELS EXTREME PRIDE EVEN AMID CONFUSION, HE REACTED AS INSTRUCTED...

...AND THIS **FORTRESS**, WHICH HAD BEEN BUILT UPON THE REMAINS OF THE HOMEWORLD'S SHATTERED MOON, HOLDS STRONG.

BUT, ABOARD THE OMEGA MEN'S STARSHIP...

NIMBUS, WE CANNOT BREAK THROUGH THEIR *DEFENSES*.

DID YOU *HEAR* THAT, PRIMUS? I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU HAD A *PLAN!*

WHATEVER IT IS, ENACT IT *NOW!*

I *WILL*, MY FRIEND. *TRUST* ME.

ALL OF YOU, HEAR ME... WE ARE ABOUT TO ENGAGE IN *BATTLE*. IT IS POSSIBLE MANY OF US MIGHT NOT LIVE TO SEE THE *END* OF THIS STRUGGLE.

BUT WE HAVE NO *ALTERNATIVES* IF WE ARE TO BRING X'HAL BACK TO *OKAARA*.

THUS WE MUST FIGHT WITH OUR HEARTS AND OUR MINDS. WE MUST ENTER THIS BATTLE KNOWING OUR CAUSE IS *JUST!*

AS OF NOW -- *THE WAR BEGINS!!*

25

BELOW THE HOMEWORLD, WITHIN THE CASTLE KEEP...

WHAT? THE CASSSTLE SHAKES FROM WARFARE? HASSS THAT FOOL PRIMUSSS ACTUALLY BROKEN THROUGH THE CITADEL'SSS DEFENSES?

WELL, PERHAPSSS IT IS *BETTER* THAT HE DOES. I CAN EASILY *MANIPULATE* THAT TRUSSSTING DOLT...

HMMMM. PERHAPSSS, IF I CAN PLAY MY CARDSSS CORRECTLY, I CAN MANEUVER BOTH SSSIDES INTO DESTROYING EACH OTHER...

...AND THUS *INSURE* THAT DEMONIA COMESSS OUT ON TOP OF THIS GAME.

WHAT? WHO DARESSS--?

THE *EARTHLING?* I SHOULD DESTROY YOU FOR-- *WAIT!* YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WAS *KILLED*. I *SSSAW* IT.

YEAH, YEAH, I *KNOW* WHAT YOU SAW, SNAKE-LIPS, BUT *GUESS WHAT?*

I'M ALIVE AND WELL AND IN FULL-LIVING *GREEN!*

BUT *HOW?*

OH, IT'S NOT TOO *DIFFICULT* WHEN YOU CAN SHAPE-CHANGE INTO AN ITSY-BITSY *SPIDER* AND QUICKLY CRAWL AWAY!

SATISFIED NOW? SO HOW ABOUT TELLING ME WHERE MY *FRIENDS* HOPPED OFF TO.

I ASSUME YOU *KNOW*, DON'T YOU NOW, DEMONIA?

YES, UH, OF COURSE I DO. I SSSAW THEM BEING TAKEN OFF TO THE *DOCKING AREA*.

THEY'RE TO BE *EXTERMINATED*. I HEARD THE ORDERSSS.

THEN WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO *COUNTERMAND* THOSE ORDERS, AREN'T WE?

OF COURSE, EARTHLING. I AM ON *YOUR* SSSIDE, AFTER ALL.

WHATEVER YOU *SAY*, SNAKE-LIPS.

OF COURSE, I'D PROBABLY *BELIEVE* WHAT YOU SAY IF YOU DIDN'T ALWAYS *TALK* ALOUD TO YOURSELF.

"DEMONIA COMES OUT ON TOP"? EH?

26

AT THE FAR END OF THE FORTRESS...

WHY WERE *WE* PICKED TO SHIP THOSE TWO TO EXTERMINATION CAMPS?

I WANTED TO WATCH THE *FIGHTS*.

YOU KNOW, MY MONEY-CHANGER GAVE ME 5 TO 2 ODDS THAT KORIAND'R WOULD *DIE*.

5 TO 2? I GOT BETTER *ODDS* THAT *THAT*, GREE.

I STAND TO CLEAR ENOUGH FOR A *VACATION* ON EUFORIX.

HMMM, MY *BROTHER-IN-LAW* WENT THERE. HE SAID HIS *ROOMS* WERE EXCELLENT BUT THE *FOOD* REPEATED ON HIM FOR WEEKS.

AND YOU CAN'T DRINK THEIR *WATER*, YOU KNOW.

WHAT ARE YOU *LOOKING* AT, GREE?

THE EARTHLING'S *WEAPONS BELT*. ONLY *ONE* WEAPON IN EACH CYLINDER. WHAT A WASTE OF *SPACE*.

OBVIOUSLY THEY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT *MINIATURIZATION*.

COME ON. THERE IS NO USE IN *COMPLAINING* ABOUT THE FIGHTS.

BESIDES, THEY WILL PROBABLY *RERUN* IT TONIGHT. LET'S GET BACK TO *WORK*.

GORDANIAN FOOLS. YOU WILL *NEVER* SSSEE THOSE FIGHTSSS.

ACCKKK

GOD, DEMONIA, YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO *KILL* HIM!

OH, YESSS I DID, EARTHLING. I *DID*.

BUT WE *BOTH* CHANGE SHAPES. YOU COULD HAVE JUST *STOMPED* HIM A BIT.

NEVER, EARTHLING. DEMONIA ONLY FIGHTSSS TO *KILL*!

REMIND ME NEVER TO GO OUT ON A *DATE* WITH YOU.

27

SPACE:

YOU GOT EVERYTHING SET IN YOUR MIND, WALLY?

I'D BETTER, DONNA, IF I WANT TO COME THROUGH THIS *ALIVE*.

JUST HAVE TO REMEMBER TO *SLOW DOWN* A BIT. MY REFLEXES OPERATE FAR *FASTER* THAN THE SHIP'S CONTROLS.

IT'S *WORKING*, GUYS. MY SUPER-SPEED VISION MAKES THESE *LASER-BLASTS* LOOK LIKE THEY'RE STANDING STILL.

I CAN WEAVE THROUGH THEM WITHOUT BEING *TOUCHED*.

DON'T GET COCKY. BE *CAREFUL*.

YOU SEE YOUR TARGET YET?

YEAH... FIRST TARGET ON MY SCREEN. THREE... TWO ...ONE...

GIVE THE MAN A BIG *CIGAR!*

TELL PRIMUS HE WAS *RIGHT*. I *AM* ABOUT THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD SLIP THROUGH THIS HAIL OF FIRE.

OKAY... MAIN TARGETS AHEAD, CLOSER NOW... CLOSER... *CLOSER*...

DID IT! SMASHED A HOLE IN THEIR *DEFENSE SHIELDS*.

BAM!

BLAMM!

BLAMMM!

28

THE WAY IS CLEAR. LET US GO!

...AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND YEARS, BRING WAR TO THE HOMEWORLD'S SURFACE.

EVERYTHING'S FALLING APART! VIC! GAR! C'MON, LET'S MOVE!

VIC?!?

IN A SECOND, PAL...

...JUST GOT SOME BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF!

SKROOOOMM!

FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED, BUT A MOMENT IS ALL IT TAKES FOR ALMOST TWO DOZEN SKY-SKIMMERS TO SLIDE PAST A PREVIOUSLY IMPENETRABLE FORTRESS...

TAMARAN:

YOU'RE INSANE! STOP THIS MADNESS BEFORE YOU KILL US BOTH!

NO, KOMAND'R. YOU WANTED THIS FIGHT, NOW YOU'LL SUFFER FOR IT.

BUT YOU CAN SIMPLY LET GO OF ME IF YOU WANT THIS FIGHT TO END NOW.

WHY DON'T YOU LET GO, SISTER?

I-- I CAN'T FLY!

I KNOW!

X'HAL! YOU ARE INSANE!

VERY WELL, KOMAND'R...YOU WANT TO GO DOWN?

WE'LL GO DOWN!

KORIAND'R IS FURIOUS, AS A LIFETIME OF TORMENT COMES BUBBLING TO THE SURFACE. BUT...

...KORIAND'R'S RAGE HAS BLINDED HER TO KOMAND'R'S VICIOUS STRENGTH.

STEEL-JACKETED ARMS PUMMEL HER WITH REPEATED AGONIZING BLOWS.

AND SHE FLOUNDERS IN THE ONRUSHING TIDE, DESPERATELY SEEKING BALANCE...

...BUT A SOLID FOOTHOLD ELUDES HER.

KORIAND'R LASHES BACK, A POWERFUL RIGHT SMASHES INTO HER SISTER'S FACE...

...BLOOD SPURTS FREELY FROM A SHATTERED NOSE, BUT KOMAND'R'S ATTACK DOES NOT LESSEN...

WHILE ASHORE, HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWS, A TALL, LITHE FIGURE WATCHES ATTENTIVELY.

WATCHES, AND WAITS.

THIS FIGHT HAS GONE ON *TOO LONG*, KORIAND'R. I WANT TO BE *DONE* WITH YOU.

NO, KOMAND'R -- *DON'T.*

DON'T USE YOUR *STARBOLT* POWERS.

WHAT? ARE YOU FREELY *ADMITTING* THAT YOU ARE WEAKER THAN I AM?

SHOUT IT OUT, SISTER. LET ALL THE WORLDS HEAR THE *TRUTH!*

YOU FOOL, DON'T YOU KNOW WHERE WE *ARE?*

IF YOU USE YOUR STARBOLT *HERE*, NO ONE WILL--

IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE. FOR A MOMENT, THEY HOVER ABOVE THE RUSHING WATERS OF TAMARAN'S SEVEN FALLS.

THEN, THE WATERS BEGIN TO BOIL, BURNING AT TEMPERATURES NO HUMAN COULD POSSIBLY SURVIVE.

STONE EXPLODES WITH VOLCANIC FURY...

...AS TWO BODIES PLUNGE LIMPLY TO THEIR...

...DEATHS?

SECONDS DRAG BY LIKE ETERNITIES. THEN...

ME WIN! KORIAND'R ALIVE. EUPHORIX, HERE ME COME!

ASTONISHING PERSEVERANCE.

STILL, HER VICTORY ME NS NOTHING. YOU ARE ALL ABOUT TO DIE.

HUH?

"OH YES. IMPLANTED INTO BOTH OF THEM WAS THE TRIGGER FOR A SERIES OF QUITE POWERFUL EXPLOSIVES.

"AS LONG AS ONE DIED, THEREBY IGNITING THE TRIGGER, CATASTROPHE WILL FOLLOW.

"AND THOUGH I WILL NOT SURVIVE TO SEE YOUR DESTRUCTION...

"...I AM CONTENT IN KNOWING PSION SCIENCE WAS ONCE AGAIN VICTORIOUS."

WORLDS BEGIN TO SHAKE. A DEATH-RATTLE ECHOES THROUGHOUT VEGA...

32

BUT, SEVERAL MOMENTS BEFORE, ON THE CITADEL HOMEWORLD...

THIS IS *IT*. THEY HAVE TO BE *HERE*.

THEY *ARE*. I SENSE THEIR PRESENCE.

IS *KORY* WITH THEM, RAVEN?

SKRASH!

I--I DO NOT *BELIEVE* SO.

WATCH IT, DONNA-- THESE CITADEL CREEPS ARE *ALL OVER* THE PLACE.

GOOD! THEN THERE ARE *MORE* FOR BROOT TO CRUSH!

BRAK!

NO, MY BARBAROUS FRIEND, WE ARE HERE TO FIND *X'HAL*. ONLY *SHE* MATTERS TO AURON.

HER POWERS *CONTROL* ME. I, WHO AM HER ONLY *SON*--I, WHO HAVE ALWAYS STRIVEN FOR *PEACE*, HAVE BEEN TURNED INTO HER *INSTRUMENT OF DEATH!*

I MUST FIND MY *MOTHER* BEFORE SHE *CONTROLS* ME AGAIN.

BEFORE SHE MAKES ME *KILL* AGAIN!

ABOUT *TIME* YOU GUYS GOT HERE. THOUGHT WE'D HAVE TO *HITCHHIKE* HOME.

WHERE'S *KORY?*

"WHERE'S KORY?" SHEESH. NOT EVEN A *HELLO* TO EVERYONE'S FAVORITE GREEN PAL?

AND RODNEY DANGERFIELD SAYS *HE* GETS NO RESPECT! *YECHH!*

YOU *ALL* RIGHT?

WE'RE *FINE*, WALLY... REALLY, *ALL* OF US.

33

YOUR ARM...

I'VE BEEN HURT BEFORE, DONNA. IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS!

BUT WE'VE GOT REAL PROBLEMS. KORY'S BEEN TAKEN TO TAMARAN.

ARE YOU BEHIND THIS, DEMONIA? IF YOU ARE, I'LL--

YOU'LL WHAT, HARPIS? YOU'RE MY SISTER, NOT MY JAILER. DON'T MAKE USELESS THREATS.

BESIDES, I'VE BEEN HELPING YOUR FRIENDS. SURELY YOU KNOW I'M A TRUSTED MEMBER OF THE OMEGA MEN.

MEANWHILE...

MOTHER? MOTHER! GOD, SOMETHING IS WRONG!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? MOTHER!?!

MAN, DOUG HENNING HAS NOTHING ON HER. WHAT HAPP--?

GUYS, I'M NOT CHICKEN LITTLE, BUT I SURE THINK THE SKY IS FALLING... AND THIS SKY IS HARD!

X'HAL! THE HOME-WORLD'S SHAKING!

HOMEWORLD? NO, PRIMUS, FAR MORE THAN ONE PLANET IS AFFECTED BY THE PSION'S QUAKE-BOMBS,

ACROSS THE BREADTH OF ALL 22 VEGAN WORLDS, A SINGLE CHAIN-REACTION BEGINS TO GROW.

MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED CITADEL WAR-STATIONS ARE MOMENTS AWAY FROM COMPLETE DEVASTATION.

BUT...

34

ONCE BEFORE SHE HAD SAVED THIS GALAXY FROM A PSION THREAT. HER REWARD WAS A FATE FAR WORSE THAN DEATH.

NOW, ALL THE PRIMAL LUSTS, ALL THE POWER, ALL THE FURY THAT IS THE GODDESS X'HAL, ALL THAT AND MORE ARE UNLEASHED.

HER POWER REACHES EVERYWHERE AT ONCE, COMBING DISTANT WORLDS, DIGGING TO THE VERY CORE OF PLANETS LONG ABANDONED--

--UNTIL SHE FINDS HER TREASURE:

MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED STRATEGICALLY-PLACED WEAPONS.

HERS IS THE POWER TO DESTROY WORLDS. HERS IS THE POWER TO TAKE ON THE GODS THEMSELVES.

HERS IS ALSO THE POWER OF SACRIFICE.

HER CHILDREN WILL LIVE... NO MATTER WHAT, HER CHILDREN MUST LIVE!

35

HMMMM. SO, WORLDS WAS GOING TO *DIE*, HUH? SO, PSION WAS GOING TO *TAKE OVER*, HUH?

PSION, YOU MAY BE THE *SMART* ONE--

--BUT YOU PLENTY *DUMB*!

MEANWHILE, BEYOND THE REACH OF THE PSION'S SCREAM...

THERE IS NO SIGN OF X'HAL. WHAT HAPPENED TO HER, PRIMUS?

NIMBUS, I WISH I *KNEW*.

COME, WE ARE WANTED ON *TAMARAN*!

AND, ON THE LUSH PARADISE THAT IS STARFIRE'S HOMEWORLD...

REST, DEAR KORIAND'R ...YOU HAVE FOUGHT YOUR WAY THROUGH HELL AND YOU STILL LIVE ON.

REST, SWEET GIRL-- WHILE I REACH IN TO TAKE YOUR *HORRORS*...

...WHILE I TAKE YOUR GREATEST *PAINS* AND MAKE THEM MY OWN.

REST... REST... REST...

TIME PASSES...

WHAT DID I *TELL* YOU? THE GIRL'S A *TROOPER*.

YOU ARE NOW *WELL*, KORIAND'R. I AM *PLEASED*.

C'MON, KORY, EVERYTHING'S JUST *FINE* NOW.

OH, MY DEAR... YOU *DID* IT, RAVEN. THANK YOU... *THANK YOU*.

WELL, ARE YOU UP FOR A *DATE*, KID? I KNOW JUST THE PLACE. YOU'LL *LOVE* IT.

36

OH, DONNA... I FEEL SO GOOD... SO *VERY* GOOD.

I'M SO *HAPPY* TO SEE ALL OF YOU.

WE WERE *WORRIED*, KORY...

KORY, WE HAVE A *SURPRISE* FOR YOU... SOMEONE WE THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO *SEE*.

BUT ALL MY FRIENDS ARE *HERE*, DICK. WHO--?

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR OWN *BROTHER*?

RYAND'R?

BUT... KOMAND'R SAID YOU KILLED OUR *PARENTS*...

CAN YOU *BELIEVE* ANYTHING THAT TRAITRESS SAYS?

X'HAL! *X'HAL!* RYAND'R... I--I LOVE YOU... ***I LOVE YOU!***

JUST LOOK AT YOU... YOU'VE GROWN, BECOME A *MAN*. OH, X'HAL, YOU'RE SO *WONDERFUL* TO LOOK AT.

BUT... OUR PARENTS... WHY DID THEY HAVE TO *DIE* BEFORE I RETURNED HOME? *WHY?*

37

DIE? WE MAY HAVE GOTTEN *OLDER*, MY DEAR GOLDEN GIRL--

--BUT WE ARE STILL VERY FAR FROM JOINING OUR *ANCESTORS*.

LOOK AT HER, MY LOVE... SHE IS *BEAUTIFUL*.

SHE LOOKS LIKE HER *MOTHER*.

YOU'RE ALIVE? *ALIVE?* BUT--?

KORY, WHAT ARE YOU *WAITING* FOR?

YOU'RE ALIVE!

YOU'RE ALIVE!! THANK X'HAL, YOU'RE ALIVE!!

YOU'RE *WONDERFUL*, RAVEN-- *CURING* HER LIKE THAT.

NO PARENTS SHOULD EVER SEE THEIR LOVED ONE *SO SCARRED*.

NOW, WE SHOULD ALL *LEAVE*. KORIAND'R IS *HOME*.

I SEARCHED THE SEA-BEDS FOR *KOMAND'R*...

... BUT THIS IS *ALL* I FOUND.

SHE COULD *NOT* HAVE SURVIVED.

DEATH IS THE *LEAST* SHE DESERVED.

38

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO *SAY* THIS, BUT I'M *HOME* AGAIN... HOME TO *STAY*.

NO, MY GOLDEN ANGEL, NOT TO *STAY*-- ALTHOUGH IT TEARS MY VERY HEART TO SAY IT.

BUT, FATHER, I *BELONG* HERE... I *LOVE*--

AS WE LOVE *YOU* WITH ALL OUR HEARTS. BUT THE *TRUTH* STILL HOLDS SWAY.

SOON THE CITADEL WILL CHOOSE ITS *NEW LEADERS* AND THEY WILL RECALL OUR *PACT*.

IF YOU *REMAIN* ON TAMARAN, WE WILL BE *DESTROYED*.

YOU HAVE TO *GO*, KORIAND'R, BUT WE WILL *BE* HERE. AND I KNOW YOU WILL *RETURN*.

MOTHER, I DON'T *WANT* TO GO... PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME *LEAVE* YOU.

TELL THEM, DICK... *TELL THEM!*

YOU KNOW THEY'RE *RIGHT*, KORY.

BUT YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT *ALONE*... WE'RE *ALSO* YOUR FAMILY AND WE *LOVE* YOU.

YOU WON'T LEAVE ME, *TOO*?

I WON'T *LEAVE* YOU.

IT IS TIME TO DEPART IF THE *OMEGA MEN* ARE TO ASSURE THAT ONE DAY KORIAND'R *CAN* RETURN.

THIS HAS BEEN A *PLEASURE*, ONE WHICH BROOT WILL NOT SOON *FORGET*.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL...

BUT I THINK KORY *UNDERSTANDS*... IT DOESN'T MATTER *WHERE* SHE IS--

--AS LONG AS SHE IS *LOVED*, SHE'S *HOME*!

END


THE NEW TEEN TITANS
NO. 26
DEC.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
CALL THEM RUNAWAYS!
G. PEREZ

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

MARV WOLFMAN + GEORGE PÉREZ * ROMEO TANGHAL * BEN ODA - LETTERER * LEN WEIN
WRITER -- CO-CREATORS -- ARTIST * INKER * ADRIENNE ROY - COLORIST * EDITOR



WELL, LOOK AT IT *THIS* WAY. SHE'S GORGEOUS, BEAUTIFUL AND STACKED. HE'S *GOT* TO LOVE HER.

MEBBE, LOGAN.

THEN AGAIN MEBBE IT'S NONE OF OUR *BUSINESS*. DESPITE THE *NAME* OF OUR LITTLE COFFEE KLATCH HERE, THEY'RE BOTH *GROWN UP*.

AND WHETHER THEIR RELATIONSHIP *WORKS* OR NOT, IT'S REALLY UP TO *THEM*, ISN'T IT?

"STILL, I HOPE DICK KNOWS WHAT HE'S GETTING INTO."

KORY, CAN I *SEE* YOU?

OF COURSE, C'MON *IN*.

DOES IT STILL *HURT*?

IT'S FINE. KORY, CAN WE *TALK*?

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE REAL *SERIOUS*, I DON'T KNOW.

I AM, BUT IT'S *OKAY*.

I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW WHY I'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE SUCH AN *ASS* LATELY.

BUT YOU'VE BEEN *WONDERFUL*.

DESPITE THE TRAUMA THAT MADE HIM BECOME WHAT HE IS, HE ALWAYS TAUGHT ME TO BE GUIDED BY MY *HEAD*, NOT MY *HEART*.

BESIDES, I THINK I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOO *INTROSPECTIVE* FOR MY OWN GOOD.

DICK...?

NO, I HAVEN'T. PLEASE *BELIEVE* ME.

YOU HAVE TO *UNDERSTAND* SOMETHING ABOUT ME. I WAS BROUGHT UP BY *THE BATMAN*.

NO, PLEASE LET ME *FINISH*. IT'LL BE *EASIER* THAT WAY.

2

YOU ALSO HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT I JUST CAME *OUT* OF A ROMANCE WITH SOMEONE I THOUGHT I CARED FOR.

THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN PUTTING YOU *OFF*.

YOU WERE IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE *ELSE*?

I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* I WAS.

CAN I REALLY BE *HONEST* WITH YOU? PART OF YOU *FRIGHTENS* ME. REALLY *SCARES* ME DOWN DEEP.

NOT THE FACT THAT YOU'RE NOT HUMAN. OR ONLY PARTIALLY HUMAN, OR WHATEVER YOU ARE... BUT SOMETHING *ELSE*.

IT'S HARD TO *EXPLAIN*. BUT, DESPITE MY REPUTATION FOR KNOWING EVERYTHING, I REALIZE I DON'T KNOW *ANYTHING*...

...ABOUT *MYSELF*.

I KNOW I *LOVE* YOU. ISN'T THAT *ENOUGH*?

I DON'T THINK SO. YOU SEE, I ONLY *THINK* I MAY LOVE YOU.

I MEAN... NOT JUST AS A *FRIEND*.

I MEAN... IN A *ROMANTIC* WAY, LORD, I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* I MEAN. I REALLY NEED TIME TO SORT OUT MY EMOTIONS.

I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD.

THE PLANET EARTH LOOMS AHEAD, SEEMINGLY GROWING LARGER WITH EVERY PASSING MOMENT...

AND, ACROSS OUR VAST WORLD, PEOPLE GO ABOUT THEIR DAILY CHORES.

MOST PEOPLE WORK FOR THE GOOD.

MOST, BUT NOT ALL.

TURKEY:

HEY! CAREFUL WITH THEM *BOXES*. THESE "TELEVISION" THINGS MIGHT BE *FRAGILE*.

"TELEVISION COMPONENTS"! *HAH!*

3

HELL! IT'S THE COPS! RUN!

POLICE! SURRENDER YOUR ARMS!

DON'T. WE HAVE YOU SURROUNDED. LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPONS.

BUT...

...THEY DON'T. AND THEY PAY FOR THEIR STUBBORNESS.

GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA:

I DON'T WANT TO SHOW HER MY REPORT CARD.

SHE'LL BEAT ME LIKE SHE ALWAYS DOES.

YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND ME, DON'T YOU?

C'MON, YOU KNOW SHE'D BE HAPPIER IF I LEFT.

LOOK, I GOT IT PLANNED. I ALREADY GOT THE TICKET TO NEW YORK.

GOT ENOUGH TO GET A PLACE AT THE "Y." I'LL DO OKAY, REALLY. I'LL EVEN GET A JOB SOMEWHERE.

PLEASE, DON'T TELL MOM TILL AFTER THE BUS LEAVES. PLEASE?

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, REALLY. I DON'T WANNA GET BEAT JUST 'CAUSE OF A COUPLE A' D'S.

4

THE BRONX, NEW YORK:

PLEASE, LUIS, DON'T GO. DON'T LEAVE. WE *LOVE* YOU.

MAN, YOU *CROWD* ME, MA. BOTH OF YOU ASKIN' TOO MANY *PERSONAL QUESTIONS*.

HEY, I GOT *RIGHTS*. I DON'T HAFTA ANSWER *NOTHIN'*. GOT THAT, MA?

YOU WAN' ME TO STAY, IT'S UNDER *MY* TERMS.

I *STAY OUT* LONG AS I WANT, I *DO* WHAT I WANT. SEE WHO I WANNA SEE, AND NO *QUESTIONS*. COMPRENDE?

DON'T WANNA BE TOLD WHAT TO *DO*. DON'T WANNA BE TOLD MY FRIENDS ARE *GARBAGE*. DON'T WANNA BE TOLD TO GO TO NO LOUSY SCHOOL.

MAN, I WANT BREAD, AND I CAN MAKE *BIG BREAD* ON THE STREET. GOT THAT, MA?

DON'T *NEED* THIS PLACE NO MORE, MAN.

ROSA, LUIS HAS MADE UP HIS MIND. WE CANNOT *STOP* HIM.

GALENO, WE CAN'T LET MY LITTLE BOY *GO*. PLEASE, MAKE HIM STAY.

DON'T LET MY BOY *LEAVE* ME.

SKOKIE, ILLINOIS:

DIDN'T YOU *HEAR* ME, DADDY? PLEASE *SAY* SOMETHING.

3215

I NEED *HELP*. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO *DO*.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT TO *DO*, LIZZIE? I'LL *TELL* YOU WHAT TO DO.

YOU GO *MARRY* THAT SCUM.

LET *HIM* TAKE CARE OF YOUR BABY. I WANT NOTHIN' TO *DO* WITH IT.

BUT, DADDY, I DON'T *WANT* TO GET MARRIED. I'M NOT *OLD* ENOUGH. WE WERE, Y'KNOW, JUST *FOOLING AROUND*, THAT'S ALL.

I RAISED YOU TO BE A *LADY*, BUT YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A ROTTEN *SLUT*. GO WALK THE *STREETS* WITH THE *REST* OF YOUR KIND.

I DON'T *KNOW* YOU ANY-MORE.

GOD, DADDY... GOD!

ON AN ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF NEW YORK'S MURKY EAST RIVER, THERE IS A TEN-STORY T-SHAPED STRUCTURE THAT ONLY A VERY FEW NEW YORKERS KNOW AS TITANS' TOWER, HOME OF THE NEW TEEN TITANS...

IT IS INDEPENDENTLY FINANCED (MOST OF THE TITANS ARE WELL-TO-DO), CONTAINS ITS OWN POWER GENERATORS, AND FEATURES VIRTUALLY EVERY ACCOMMODATION NEEDED.

AND, IF YOU'VE JUST RETURNED HERE AFTER A LONG AND PAINFUL BATTLE IN SPACE, IT'S ALSO A REALLY NEAT PLACE TO BE.

THIS IS MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME. IF I CAN'T BE ON TAMARAN, THERE'S NO PLACE ELSE I'D RATHER BE.

I SURE COULD USE A HOT BATH RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

LORD, I ACHE IN PLACES I'D FORGOTTEN I HAD.

IT REALLY DOES FEEL GOOD BEING BACK HERE.

I'VE MISSED IT, TRULY MISSED THIS PLACE.

TOWER, I LOVE YOU AND YOUR WALLS AND FLOORS AND COMPUTER GIZMOS AND THINGIES AND ELEVATORS AND DOODADS AND--

DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE GETTING CARRIED AWAY, GAR?

SHUT UP, RUSTHEAD. I'M A ROMANTIC. WE ALWAYS OVER-EMOTE.

WHERE WAS I? OH, YES, TOWER, I LOVE YOU. LET'S RUN AWAY TOGETHER AND MAKE LITTLE BUNGALOWS!

6

THIS PLACE IS MORE OF A HOME TO ME THAN *PARADISE ISLAND* EVER WAS.

I TRULY FEEL AS IF I *BELONG* HERE.

I GREW UP ON THOSE STREETS. AND I *BLED* ON THOSE STREETS IN MORE GANG FIGHTS THAN I WANNA REMEMBER.

YEAH, *I* REALLY GET OFF ON OL' WORMY, TOO.

THEY SAY THERE ARE MORE *GORGEOUS GIRLS* PER SQUARE INCH HERE THAN ON ANY CALIFORNIA BEACH.

I GOTTA TAKE OFF, GUYS. I HAVEN'T SEEN SARAH SIMMS OR THE KIDS IN *WEEKS*.

YOU KNOW, SOMETIMES I THINK THOSE KIDS HELP *ME* MORE'N I CAN EVER HELP THEM.

YEAH, YOU SEE SARAH. ME, I'M PRACTICIN' FOR ALL THOSE *GIRLS*.

I WANT TO GET MY *PUCKER* DOWN PAT.

SPACE: *PTUI!!* NEW YORK: *YAY!*

ARE YOU GOING TO BE *ALL RIGHT*, RAVEN?

I *THINK* SO, WALLACE. BUT I REALIZE IT IS STILL EARLY. I HAVE TO RE-REGISTER FOR MY *FALL SEMESTER* IN COLLEGE.

I HAVE MISSED SO MUCH *ALREADY*.

I'LL *WALK* YOU, RAVEN, IF IT'S ALL RIGHT?

THAT WOULD BE *FINE*, WALLACE. I THINK I WOULD ... *ENJOY* THE COMPANY.

DONNA, DICK'S TAKING ME TO *GOTHAM CITY* TONIGHT SO I WON'T BE *HOME*. IS THAT OKAY?

SHE'LL BE *SAFE*, DONNA. MY ARM'S STILL BUSTED. WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE *ALFRED* AS A CHAPERONE.

YOU TWO *ENJOY* YOURSELVES. I'VE GOT A LONG OVERDUE *DATE* WITH A CERTAIN HANDSOME COLLEGE HISTORY PROFESSOR.

MR. TERRY LONG AND I HAVE A *LOT* OF CATCHING UP TO DO...

...AND *CHAPERONES* ARE NOT PERMITTED.

AND SO ONE STORY ENDS, BUT ANOTHER SLOWLY UNFOLDS.

7

SEVERAL WEEKS PASS BY BEFORE WE ENCOUNTER A PROBLEM FAR WORSE THAN ANY SUPER-VILLAIN...

NEW YORK CITY: UNDER THE GLITTERING LIGHTS OF BROADWAY...

KORY, EVERYONE SWEARS WE'LL LOVE "NINE"! IT'S THIS YEAR'S MEGA-HIT!

BEING WITH YOU IS ALL I CARE ABOUT, DICK. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT!

LIVE ON STAGE MARY MAHOE

OPEN 24

REX RAFFY

TAXI

REX

CRF 49

8

AND I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE FINALLY ON A *REAL DATE*.

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*? WE'VE BEEN GOING OUT FOR *WEEKS* NOW.

OH, I KNOW. BUT NOT LIKE *THIS*.

GETTING DRESSED UP AND GOING TO A BROADWAY SHOW IS SOMETHING *SPECIAL*.

DICK, LOOK OVER *THERE*!

ISN'T THAT THE *DISTRICT ATTORNEY* WE MET AFTER THE BROTHER BLOOD FIGHT?

ADRIAN CHASE. YEAH, I THOUGHT HE WAS A REAL *HARD-BOILED* CASE. GUESS EVEN *HE* TAKES TIME OFF TO *RELAX*.

LET'S GO OVER AND SAY "*HI!*"

UH-UH. YOU *FORGET*. HE MET STARFIRE AND ROBIN, NOT *KORY ANDERS* AND *DICK GRAYSON*.

OUR *CIVILIAN ID*'s AREN'T SUPPOSED TO *KNOW* HIM.

BESIDES, CHASE IS *BUSINESS*. TONIGHT WE'RE OUT FOR *FUN*.

THEY'LL HELP... THEY *GOTTA* HELP.

GOD, BUGS ALL OVER ME, ALL *OVER* ME. FOLLOWIN' ME.

HEY! GIMME YOUR MONEY, *ALL* YOUR MONEY.

YOU *HEAR* ME? GIMME YOUR *MONEY*.

WHAT'RE YOU *WAITIN'* FOR? THE BUGS ARE ALL *OVER* ME, MAN. DON'T YOU *SEE* 'EM? I NEED *MONEY*, MAN. *GIMME*.

ADRIAN, PLEASE DON'T *FIGHT* HIM.

PUT DOWN THAT *BLADE*, KID. YOU DON'T WANT TO *HURT* ANYONE.

WE'VE GOT TO *HELP* HIM, DICK.

WE *WILL*, IF CHASE CAN'T HANDLE IT.

GIVE HIM A *CHANCE*.

LISTEN, KID, YOU'RE NOT *WELL*. LET ME *HELP* YOU, OKAY?

HEY, I'M FINE, FLYING *FINE*. IT'S JUST ALL THEM DAMNED *BUGS*.

BUT YOUR MONEY'LL SEND THEM AWAY. THEY WON'T *HURT ME*.

9

Y'KNOW, THEY WERE *AFTER* ME. THE BUGS AND THE OTHERS. OUT TO *CUT* ME 'CAUSE I RAN WITH THE MONEY.

BUT I CAN PAY 'EM OFF WITH *YOUR* MONEY.

C'MON, MAN, WHAT YOU *WAITIN'* FOR? GOTTA BUY THE STUFF AND MAKE 'EM *STOP!*

SORRY, KID, YOU DON'T NEED *MONEY*. YOU NEED SOME TIME IN *BELLEVUE*. GIVE ME YOUR-- *AGGHHH!*

ADRIAN--YOUR *SHOULDER!*

DOESN'T *HURT*. C'MON, KID, LET'S GO.

SEE, KORY, CHASE HANDLED IT *WITHOUT* US.

SOMETIMES WE FORGET WE'RE NOT *ALWAYS* NEEDED.

BUT...

NO! NO! NONONONO! NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE... NO-- THEY'LL FIND ME, THEY'LL *FIND ME!*

LET ME *GO*, MAN... GOTTA GET *OUTTA* HERE. *LET ME GO!*

ADRIAN!

I'LL GIVE 'EM BACK THE *CASH*, THAT'S WHAT. THEY'LL TAKE THE *BUGS AWAY* FROM ME.

GIVE IT ALL *BACK*.

PLEASE, DON'T GO *AFTER* HIM.

THE DAMNED FOOL! HE'S NOT LOOKING WHERE HE'S *GOING*.

OH, GOD-- *KID!!*

KID!

DICK!

NO!

BEEP

THREE MINUTES LATER. SIRENS SLICE THROUGH THE NEW YORK NIGHT, ZIG-ZAGGING DOWN CROWDED STREETS...

HOW IS HE?

DEAD.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN INSTANTANEOUS.

OH, GOD.

ADRIAN, ARE WE EVER GOING TO GET AWAY FROM THIS VIOLENCE?

I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE IT ANY LONGER. THE CITY'S GETTING TO ME.

HONEY, IT'S THE SAME EVERYWHERE. THERE'S NO ESCAPE.

SOMETIMES I THINK THE ANIMALS HAVE TAKEN OVER.

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THAT BOY?

MOST LIKELY DRUGS.

DAMN. IT'S A SHAME, KORY.

I REALLY FEEL SORRY FOR KIDS LIKE THAT.

TITANS' TOWER...

OH, NO-- NO! C'MON. OH, GOD-- NO!

I--I DON'T BELIEVE IT. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

NONO NO!

LOST AGAIN! STUPID GAME! SOMETIMES I THINK ATARI HATES ME PERSONALLY.

SKRREEE

NUTS! IT FIGURES... THE EMERGENCY SIGNAL!

UH-OH, SOMETHING'S UP AT THE STATUE OF LIBERTY. WELL, GUESS I SHOULD CALL IN THE OTHERS.

THEN AGAIN, I COULD LET THE COPS HANDLE IT AND TRY ANOTHER ROUND OF SWORDQUEST.

NAH! WHO AM I KIDDING? I'M A SUPER-HERO. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO PUT OUR LIVES ON THE LINE TO HELP OTHERS.

GOD, WE'RE STUPID.

KEEP AN EYE ON HER... DON'T LET HER ESCAPE.

HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO THAT?

YOU SEE HER POWERS?

MEANWHILE...

WELL, WELL, LOOK WHAT WE HAVE HERE.

HALF OF NEW YORK CITY'S FINEST HAVE GATHERED TO STOP--HER?

HI, HONEY--WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? LOSE YOUR BOYFRIEND?

COME TO UNCLE CHANGELING--I CAN HELP YOU IF SOMETHING'S WRONG.

CHANGELING? STAY AWAY FROM ME.

DON'T GET CLOSE OR I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU.

I HAVE MY ASSIGNMENT. I HAVE TO DESTROY THIS STATUE.

YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW. IT'S A DIRTY JOB. BUT HONEY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT.

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE IN TROUBLE. LET ME HELP.

NO--STAY AWAY.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.

BUT YOU'RE STILL GOING TO TRY TO STOP ME, AREN'T YOU?

12

OKAY, THE *STATUE* STAYS IN ONE PIECE...I *CAN'T* LET MYSELF BE CAUGHT.

FOR NOW, CHANGELING, YOU *WIN!*

BUT THE *NEXT* TIME WE MEET, I WILL HAVE TO *KILL* YOU!

WHAT THE HECK IS SHE DOING?

JUMPING?

IN AN INSTANT, THE TITANS' RESIDENT METAMORPH ALTERS HIS HUMAN SHAPE...

...AND...

DON'T TRY TO *CHASE* ME, CHANGELING. IT CAN'T BE *DONE!*

I'VE GOT *POWERS* YOU HAVEN'T EVEN *DREAMED* OF!

I'M CALLED *TERRA*-- THAT'S AS IN *EARTH* POWERS!

CRUNCH!

I CAN DO MOST *ANYTHING* -- INCLUDING ERUPTING A SOLID COLUMN OF *EARTH* SKYWARD TO SLOW *MY* FALL--

--AND SMASH *YOU* INTO OBLIVION!

OKAY, KID--DON'T MOVE. WE HAVE *YOU COVERED.*

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. YOU *SAW* WHAT I CAN DO.

AND YOU *STILL* COME AFTER ME?

SHE'S GOING TO *DO* SOMETHING--*FIRE!*

ARE YOU PEOPLE *INSANE?* ALL I HAVE TO DO IS RAISE AN EARTHEN SHIELD AND YOUR BULLETS ARE *STOPPED* IN THEIR TRACKS!

13

AND IF THE SHIELD ISN'T ENOUGH, I CAN *CHANGE* THAT COLUMN --

--INTO AN UNSTOPPABLE *MONSTER!*

SO PLEASE LET ME GO BEFORE YOU MAKE ME KILL YOU.

I DON'T WANT TO DO ANY OF THIS IN THE *FIRST* PLACE!

DON'T MAKE IT *HARDER* ON ME, *PLEASE!!*

SORRY, SHORT-STUFF, BUT YOU'RE *NOT* STOPPING ME.

LOOK, LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT. I'M THE *GOOD GUY* AND YOU'RE THE *BAD GUY.*

IF I LET YOU GO, I'D HAVE TO TURN IN MY SUPER-HERO *UNION CARD!*

AND YOU KNOW HOW *LONG* IT TOOK FOR ME TO *GET* THE BLASTED THING?

SKRUNCH!

OH-NO -- I DON'T *LIKE* THIS.

THEY'RE COMING FROM ALL SIDES. I'M NOT *READY* FOR A BIG BATTLE.

GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

BLAST! I THOUGHT I WAS SO MUCH *BETTER*, THOUGHT I HAD IT ALL WORKED OUT.

THEY'LL *KILL* ME FOR FOULING UP. THEY'LL JUST *KILL ME.*

AS IF PRO-PELLED FROM THE HEART OF A *VOLCANO*, THE GIRL NAMED TERRA SOARS OFF...

...VANISHING INTO THE FAR DISTANT MISTS...

SHE'S ESCAP-ING... AND I'M -- I'M OUT OF *POWER!*

WHO *IS* SHE?

MEANWHILE, IN A WELL-KNOWN EATING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE MIDDLE OF NEW YORK'S TIMES SQUARE DISTRICT...

YOU'RE *FULL* OF SURPRISES, RAVEN, I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D RE-REGISTER FOR PROFESSOR HOLLIS' CLASS.

NEWSTAND

AND I *NEVER* THOUGHT YOU'VE EVER GO OUT WITH ANY OF US.

YOU ALWAYS KEEP AWAY FROM US.

MY FRIENDS HAVE SUGGESTED I *ASSOCIATE* WITH OTHERS. BUT I DO FEEL *AWKWARD* BEING IN THIS PLACE.

PLEASE, PAUL -- DO *NOT* ASK ME QUESTIONS.

I DO NOT LIKE TO *TALK* ABOUT MYSELF.

THAT'S *ANOTHER* THING -- WHERE DO YOU *COME* FROM?

C'MON, RAVEN, WE'VE BEEN GOING TO THE SAME CLASSES FOR MONTHS. YOU CAN *LIGHTEN* UP WITH US.

NO! DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND ME? I CAN NOT--

AGGHH!

THE PAIN!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH YOU?

GET *AWAY* FROM ME, PAUL... YOU DO NOT KNOW ME. YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND ME.

THAT GIRL... SHE IS THE *SOURCE* OF MY PAIN.

I SENSE HUNGER... FEAR ...THE GIRL HAS BEEN *HURT* BOTH PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY.

SHE NEEDS MY *HELP!*

ARE YOU CRAZY? RAVEN... DON'T YOU KNOW *WHAT* SHE IS?

LOOK AT HER... AND LEAVE HER *ALONE.*

YOU ARE A *FOOL,* PAUL. SHE IS IN *AGONY.* DO YOU EVER FEEL THE PAIN OF OTHERS OR ARE YOU ONLY CONCERNED WITH YOUR OWN PETTY GRATIFICATIONS?

THE GIRL CRIES OUT FOR HELP.

SHE NEEDS *MY* HELP.

SHE NEEDS ME.

15

SHORTLY, SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT NOW?

THANK HEAVEN... I NEEDED FOOD. I WAS SO *HUNGRY* AND IT WAS HURTING SO MUCH.

YOU HAVEN'T EATEN?

GOD, NO--NOT FOR *DAYS*. NOT SINCE THE COPS PICKED UP HOWARD.

HOWARD?

THE GUY I GOTTA GIVE ALL MY *MONEY* TO, THE COPS PICKED HIM UP AND I DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY.

LOOK, I WANNA THANK YOU. SAY, WHAT'S YOUR *NAME*?

PLEASE CALL ME *RAVEN*, AND YOU?

LIZZIE ANGELO.

THIS HOWARD HAS YOU *WALKING THE STREETS*, LIZZIE?

VICTOR, THANK YOU FOR YOUR *FOOD* AND APARTMENT.

'S NOTHIN', RAVEN. DID THIS HOWARD ALSO *BEAT* YOU, LIZZIE?

M-MY GOD! YOUR FACE!

BURT REYNOLDS HAS *NOTHING* TO WORRY ABOUT, DOES HE?

LIZZIE, SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU'VE BEEN TREATED REAL BADLY THESE PAST FEW WEEKS. YOU NEED *HELP*.

C'MON, CLEAN THAT *GUNK* OFF YOUR FACE. I WANT TO *SHOW* YOU SOMETHING.

HE WATCHES, AND HE WAITS.

THIS MIGHT BE HIS FIRST CLUE IN DAYS.

HOWEVER LONG IT WILL TAKE, HE WAITS.

AND WATCHES.

16

SEVERAL HOURS LATER...

LIZZIE, THIS IS A *RUNAWAY CENTER*. I THINK YOU BELONG HERE.

HUH? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I *RAN* AWAY?

I DID IT WHEN I WAS A KID, TOO. *SEVERAL* TIMES.

AND I KEPT COMING HERE. THEY TOOK *CARE* OF ME AND THEY DIDN'T HASSLE ME. DIDN'T TRY'N *CALL* MY FOLKS, EITHER -- NOT 'TIL I WAS READY.

THEY CAN *HELP* YOU, LIZZIE.

AND SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...

YOU *PROMISE* NOT TO CALL MY DAD? HE DOESN'T EVEN WANT TO KNOW ME 'CAUSE A' THE KID.

SHE'S REALLY *WORRIED*, ELLIE. AND *SCARED*.

NO MORE SO THAN *YOU* WERE THE FIRST TIME, VICTOR.

MAYBE YOU WERE *TOUGHER* ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT JUST AS SOFT INSIDE.

DON'T WORRY LIZZIE, WE ONLY WANT TO *HELP*.

YOU GO WITH DR. RAYMOND. SHE'LL CHECK YOU OUT. IF YOU'RE *PREGNANT*, YOU HAVE TO BE ESPECIALLY *CAREFUL*.

SHE WAS VERY *HUNGRY!*

THEY MOSTLY *ALL* ARE WHEN THEY FIRST GET HERE. FOOD IS THE RUNAWAY'S BIGGEST PROBLEM.

YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE SOME OF THE *MALNUTRITION* PROBLEMS WE'VE ENCOUNTERED.

BY THE WAY, THERE IS SOMEONE HERE WHO'D LIKE TO *SEE* YOU.

DO YOU KNOW *ADRIAN CHASE*, OUR DISTRICT ATTORNEY?

YEAH, WE'VE MET.

WELL, WELL, THE KIDDIE DO-GOODERS SQUAD IS HERE. MY *DAY* IS MADE.

LISTEN, LAST NIGHT A KID WAS KILLED. WE FOUND VARIOUS NARCOTICS HIDDEN ON HIS PERSON. HE WAS HUSTLING *DOPE* FOR A BIG SUPPLIER.

OUR SOURCES SAY WE'RE GOING TO SEE A VERY LARGE SHIP-MENT HIT THE STREETS ANY DAY NOW.

I NEED YOUR *HELP*.

17

HE LISTENS INTENTLY. TIME IS RUNNING SHORT-- BUT, HE THINKS, AT LEAST NOW HE KNOWS WHERE TO BEGIN.

FROM HIS JACKET POCKET HE REMOVES A CRUMPLED PAPER AND GLANCES AT THE ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR HAND-WRITING...

...COMMITTING THE WRITTEN ADDRESS TO ANGRY MEMORY.

HE THEN LEAVES, KNOWING HIS REASON FOR COMING TO THIS DIRT-RIDDEN CITY IS COMING TO A HEAD AT LAST.

YOU HAVE TO REALIZE THOSE KIDS HAVE A TERRIBLY *LOW OPINION* OF THEM-SELVES.

SO, WHEN THE GIRLS ARE TOLD BY PIMPS HOW *BEAUTIFUL* THEY REALLY ARE, WHEN THEY'RE GIVEN EXPENSIVE CLOTHING, THEY START TO *BELIEVE*.

AND WITHIN A WEEK, THESE CONFUSED KIDS ARE WALKING THE STREETS, TURNING TRICKS. THAT'S GIRLS AND BOYS *ALIKE*.

THEY'RE ALSO RECRUITED TO SELL *DRUGS*--AND, MAN, IS *THAT* A PROBLEM FOR US.

THESE KIDS CAN MAKE A *THOUSAND* A WEEK. HOW THE HELL DO YOU CONVINCE THEM TO TAKE AN *HONEST* JOB FOR MAYBE LESS THAN A *HUNDRED*?

YOU JUST HAVE TO HOPE YOU CAN REACH INSIDE THEM AND MAKE THEM *CARE* AGAIN...

...AND *THAT'S* OUR HARDEST JOB. THEY *HAVE* TO CARE ABOUT THEMSELVES.

HOW DO *YOU* FIT INTO ALL THIS?

THAT KID I MENTIONED WAS A *RUNAWAY*. HE *CAME* FROM THIS PLACE.

HE WAS NOT ONLY A SUPPLIER, BUT A *USER*.

AND THAT, MISTER, IS WHERE *YOU* LONG-UNDERWEAR CHARACTERS COME IN.

ELSEWHERE...

THERE THEY ARE...

...THE SCUM!

ETTE

PLAYING GAMES LIKE IT NEVER *HAPPENED*.

MAN, ARE THEY EVER GONNA *PAY*--

--*BIG!*

...WE CALLED IN OUR SUPPLY JUST TO *RESTOCK*. DAMN THEM TURKS.

COST US QUARTER OF A BILLION.

BUT WE'LL MAKE IT ALL *BACK*, AN' THERE'LL BE NOTHIN' TO TRACE IT BACK TO *US*.

TWO HUNDRED STUPID KIDS ARE GONNA DO OUR *DIRTY WORK* FOR US!

FEW MORE DAYS AND WE'LL BE *SWIMMIN'* IN DOUGH!

LUIS GOMEZ PASSES ANOTHER DRINK TO ANTHONY SCARAPELLI, WHILE CASUALLY GLANCING AT THE SCANTILY-CLAD YOUNG LADIES.

THEN HE NOTICES A FAINT GLINT OF LIGHT SHINING OUT FROM A DARK CORNER OF A NEARBY DOCK.

19

MR. SCARAPELLI -- THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE *WATCHING* US.

GOOD WORK, KID.

PROBABLY A *NARC*. WE'LL SKRAG 'IM.

SUDDENLY, AND FOR A VERY GOOD REASON, THE YOUNG MAN IS SCARED. AND SCARED, HE RUNS...

BAM

BAM

BAM

...NOT KNOWING EXACTLY WHERE HE IS GOING OR HOW HE WILL GET THERE.

HIS CHEST NEARLY BURSTS WITH PAIN AS HIS HEART SEEMS TO EXPLODE WITH EVERY STEP.

ARE THEY STILL BEHIND HIM, HE WONDERS? HE CAN ONLY HEAR THE THUNDEROUS DRUMMING OF HIS RAPIDLY BEATING HEART.

HOPING AGAINST HOPE, HE TURNS.

"OH, GOD!"

THE CAR ROARS LIKE SOME DRAGON OF OLD...

... NOT SPITTING OUT *FIRE* BUT SOMETHING JUST AS *DEADLY*.

FASTER! FASTER! *FASTER!* IT HURTS SO MUCH... SO MUCH.

ONCE MORE THE THE DRAGON ROARS.

20

POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

WE COULDN'T *ALL* MAKE IT, CHASE... BUT WE'LL DO THE *BEST* WE CAN.

NOW, HOW ABOUT SOME *EXPLANATIONS*.

SHORT AND SWEET, ROBIN. TURKISH POLICE STOPPED A BIG *DRUG SHIPMENT* SO SUPPLY ON THE STREETS HAS *DRIED UP*.

THE *MOB* CALLED IN ITS EUROPEAN CONNECTIONS AND A *NEW* SHIPMENT IS DUE HERE AT ANY TIME.

WE'VE BEEN WATCHING ALL THE KNOWN AGENTS, BUT WE'VE HEARD THE MOB IS GOING TO USE *KIDS* TO FERRY THE JUNK THROUGH TOWN.

SURELY THE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THE *DANGERS*?

THE KIDS ARE *SCARED*, RAVEN. THEY'LL DO WHAT THEY'RE TOLD.

BESIDES, THESE KIDS FIGURE THEY'VE GOT *NOTHING* TO LOSE.

21

I CAN'T *UNDERSTAND* THAT. AS LONG AS THERE'S *LIFE*, THERE'S ALWAYS SO MUCH TO *GAIN*.

NOT EVERYONE'S AN *OPTIMIST*, STARFIRE.

SO WHAT DO YOU WANT *US* TO DO?

CYBORG, *MY* HANDS ARE TIED BY A THOUSAND DAMNED LAWS.

I CAN'T GET THE ANSWERS I NEED, BUT *YOU* CAN. YOU CAN BREAK A FEW *HEADS* IF YOU WANT TO.

WE DON'T *WORK* LIKE THAT, CHASE. THERE ARE *LAWS*...

LAWS?

GOOD GOD, KID! THAT WORD IS STARTING TO MAKE MY *SKIN* CRAWL!

BUT YOU'RE A *D.A.*-- SWORN TO *UPHOLD* THE LAW.

MAYBE I NO LONGER *CARE* ABOUT THE LAW.

MAYBE I JUST CARE ABOUT WHAT'S *RIGHT!*

THOSE WORDS... ROBIN HAS HEARD THEM BEFORE, SPOKEN WITH THE SAME FANATICAL INTENSITY...

WELL, WHAT DO *YOU* GUYS THINK?

WE'LL GO ALONG WITH *YOUR* DECISION, ROBIN. THIS ISN'T OUR *USUAL* LINE, BUT...

ALL RIGHT, CHASE. WE'RE *IN*. BUT WE DO THINGS *OUR* WAY.

JUST *GET* THOSE SCUM. THAT'S *ALL* I CARE ABOUT.

THEY LEAVE AND HEAD MIDTOWN TO VICTOR STONE'S APARTMENT...

CHASE SCARES ME. THAT MAN'S OUT FOR BLOOD.

HE'S OKAY, VIC. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

OKAY? I THINK HE'S TIPPING OVER THE EDGE-- THE WRONG WAY.

LISTEN, HE'S BAD NEWS AND I--

WAIT! AZAR HELP ME!

WHAT IS IT, RAVEN?

FROM YOUR APARTMENT, VICTOR... PAIN...TERRIBLE, TERRIBLE PAIN...

...SOMEONE IS... DYING.

MOVE IT, WITCH. LEMME...

RAVEN, IS HE--?

...INSIDE--?!?

DICK, HE'S NOT MOVING!

23

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.

EXTRA! FREE 16-PAGE COMIC PREVIEW
ATARI FORCE†

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

NO. 27
JAN.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

TM

†TM Atari, Inc.

PROLOGUE

NEW YORK CITY: OVER 30 BILLION SE TOWN

HER NAME IS ANGELINE CAROW AND SHE IS FROM ST. LOUIS, MO....

ALONE IN NEW YORK, WITHOUT MONEY, SHE IS HUNGRY...

HEY, GIRL-- NO REASON TO STARVE, BABY.

YOU WANT FOOD, YOU CAME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. THEY CALL ME LUIS, HONEY--AND IF YOU WANT, I CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO MAKE BIG BUCKS.

Y-YOU CAN?

YEAH, HONEY, JUST COME WITH YOUR NEW BIG DADDY.

HIS NAME IS SYLVESTER JOHNSON AND HE IS FROM CLEARWATER, FLA....

NUTS. OUT OF QUARTERS.

Swordquest

FORGET QUARTERS, MAN. I CAN GET YOU ENOUGH TO BUY THAT BIG, BAD MEAN MACHINE.

YOU INTERESTED, MAN?

YOU KNOW IT.

C'MON, HOT-SHOT, YOU JUST DONE STRUCK IT RICH!

HIS NAME IS STEVEN BROWN AND HE IS FROM SAN DIEGO, CA....

REAL BIG MONEY, BRO'-- JUST FOR CARRYIN' SOME WELL-PACKED ENVELOPES.

WHAT YOU SAY, BRO'?

DON'T NEED YOUR DIRTY MONEY, MAN.

GONNA MAKE IT ON MY OWN.

SUIT YOURSELF, AMIGO, THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHERS.

AND SO IT GOES...

THE NEW TEEN TITANS

CREATED BY WOLFMAN & PÉREZ IN

RUNAWAYS

THE APARTMENT OF *VICTOR STONE*, A.K.A. *CYBORG*...

HE'S NOT *BREATHING*, IS HE, RAVEN?

WHAT *HAPPENED* TO HIM? WHO *IS* HE?

STARFIRE, I HAVEN'T THE *FOGGIEST*.

HE'S OBVIOUSLY BEEN *SHOT*, BUT WHY? *WHO DID IT?*

HE IS BARELY *ALIVE*, ROBIN.

BUT I CAN SENSE *LIFE*.

CAN YOU *HELP* HIM, WITCH?

DO I HAVE ANY *CHOICE*, CYBORG?

I AM AN *EMPATH*. I CAN NO MORE *DISREGARD* THIS BOY'S PAIN THAN I COULD *YOURS*.

WHAT I AM *FORCES* ME INTO ACTION.

MARV WOLFMAN, WRITER
GEORGE PÉREZ, PENCILLER
ROMEO TANGHAL, INKER
TODD KLEIN, LETTERS
ADRIENNE, COLORS
LEN WEIN, EDITOR

2

THAT DOESN'T *SOUND* LIKE YOU.

DON'T TELL ME YOU *MISS* KID FLASH?

WHERE IN BLAZES *IS* HE, ANYWAY?

HOME... HE HAS HIS *SCHOOL WORK.*

I NOTICED IT *TOO,* RAVEN. IS SOMETHING *WRONG?* CAN I *HELP?*

IF YOU DO NOT MIND, STARFIRE, I HAVE *WORK* THAT MUST BE...

...BE DONE.

THIS IS... NO *EASY* TASK.

HIS PAINS...SO TERRIBLE...SO VERY DEEP...

RAVEN...

THEY FLOW FROM HIM INTO ME AND THEY *HURT* SO VERY MUCH.

WHAT'S *WRONG,* RAVEN?

AZAR! THEY HURT ME... *HURT* ME.

RAVEN?!?

WHAT *HAPPENED* TO HER?

WE'VE NEVER CONSIDERED THAT *ABSORBING* THOSE PAINS MUST SOMEHOW *AFFECT* HER.

I DON'T *GET* IT. THIS NEVER HAPPENED *BEFORE.*

DIDN'T KID FLASH SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS HAPPENING ON *TAMARAN?*

I SAW IT, TOO. IT WAS AS IF THE PAINS *STAYED* WITHIN HER. AS IF SHE COULDN'T *DISPEL* THEM. HOWEVER SHE DOES THAT.

3

THE *BOY* SEEMS ALL RIGHT. THAT MEANS RAVEN *SUCCEEDED.*

YEAH. BUT WHAT IN HELL HAS SHE *DONE* TO HERSELF?

THERE WAS SOMETHING *MORE.* KID FLASH SAID HE HEARD THE VOICE OF HER FATHER *TRIGON* COMING FROM HER.

BLAST IT, WHY DOES RAVEN ALWAYS KEEP THESE THINGS TO *HERSELF?*

ROBIN, CAN YOU FEEL THE *HEAT* COMING FROM HER?

IT'S *AWFUL.*

NO!

I ... I WON'T LET YOU TOUCH ME ...

...WON'T LET YOU TAKE ME OVER.

AWAY FROM ME ...*AWAY!* AZAR, HELP ME, AZAR...

AWAY!

ONLY FOR NOW, DAUGHTER. ONLY FOR NOW.

RAVEN? ARE YOU--?

I AM... *WELL,* ROBIN.

NO, YOU'RE *NOT,* RAVEN.

PLEASE, TELL US WHAT'S *WRONG.* IT'S SO HARD TO BE YOUR FRIEND WHEN YOU WON'T *TALK* TO US.

THERE IS NOTHING TO *TELL,* ROBIN.

OUR FRIEND'S JOINED THE WORLD OF THE LIVING, *TOO.*

MEBBE NOW WE CAN GET SOME *ANSWERS.*

FIRST QUESTION, KID. HOW DID YOU GET *IN* HERE?

THE *LANDLORD* LET ME INSIDE. I TOLD HIM I WAS YOUR *FRIEND.*

I *HAD* TO COME HERE. I COULDN'T GO ANYWHERE *ELSE.*

OKAY, OKAY, LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING. WHO *ARE* YOU?

PAUL TAYLOR.

MY BROTHER *DIED* HERE A FEW DAYS AGO.

MIKE-- HE WAS MY BROTHER--WAS A *RUNAWAY* AND GOT MIXED UP IN THINGS HE *SHOULDN'T* HAVE.

YOUR *BROTHER* WAS THE ONE HIT BY THE *CAR?*

YEAH, BUT THAT WASN'T WHAT *REALLY* KILLED HIM. IT WAS THE *DRUGS*.

DID HE TAKE DRUGS *BEFORE* HE RAN AWAY?

NO. NOT *REALLY*. HE MAY HAVE TRIED A *JOINT*, BUT THAT'S *IT*. NOTHING TOO *STRONG*.

WHY TAKE *ANY* DRUGS?

HELL, HOW SHOULD *I* KNOW? *I* NEVER DID. BUT MIKE, HE SORT OF FOLLOWED WHAT HIS *FRIENDS* DID.

ONE OF HIS FRIENDS *RAN AWAY* LAST YEAR. THEN *MIKE* DID.

NOW HE'S *DEAD*.

I *SPOKE* WITH HIM LAST WEEK. HE SOUNDED SO *SCARED*...SCARED OF THE GUYS HE WORKED WITH.

HE WAS WORKING FOR A *MOBSTER* WHO SOLD DRUGS. MIKE WAS A *STREET PUSHER*.

DID HE TELL YOU *WHO* HIS SUPPLIER WAS?

To my brother Paul from Mike

NO. HE *DIDN'T* TELL ME... BUT I *FOUND OUT*.

...AT THE RUNAWAY CENTER AFTER I WENT THROUGH HIS *CLOTHES*.

SHORTLY...

YEAH, THIS IS THE *PLACE*. HE STAYED *HERE*. HE SAID THE PEOPLE HERE TOOK *GOOD CARE* OF HIM.

YEAH, THEY *DO*. THEY *FEED* KIDS, WATCH *OUT* FOR THEM, AN' EVEN TRY'N' HELP THEM FIND *JOBS*.

THEY GOT CENTERS LIKE THIS IN *EVERY* MAJOR CITY...

...THOUGH THEY DON'T HAVE ANGELS LIKE *ELLIE* HERE RUNNIN' 'EM.

PLEASED TO *MEET* YOU.

BUT WE'RE NOT SURROGATE PARENTS HERE AND WE DON'T *DICTATE* EVERY MOVE THE KIDS MAKE. THEY'RE FREE TO COME AND GO.

AND FREE TO MAKE FRIENDS... EVEN *BAD* FRIENDS.

I'M SO *SORRY* ABOUT MIKE. WE REALLY TRIED TO *HELP* HIM.

AND I'M HERE TO *FIND* THOSE FRIENDS OF HIS.

OH YES. TITANS, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET...

...ROY HARPER!

5

ROY, IT'S BEEN A WHILE.

YOU *KNOW* EACH OTHER?

UHHH...WE WORKED TOGETHER A FEW MONTHS AGO--ON A DRUG BUST IN MIAMI.*

I'M REALLY GLAD TO *SEE* YOU GUYS AGAIN.

*IN BEST OF DC (TITANS) DIGEST #18. --LEN.

C'MON, THE CREEPS WHO FED THAT CRUD TO MY BROTHER ARE PROBABLY MAKING THEIR *MOVE.*

CALM DOWN, PAUL. WE'LL FIND THEM WITHOUT *HISTRIONICS.*

SURE, SURE, *BEAUTIFUL.* I SEE, HARPER, THAT YOU'VE *MET* OUR TEENAGE VIGILANTES HERE.

BET YOU'RE REALLY CHOKED UP ABOUT *WORKING* WITH THEM.

ACTUALLY, MR. CHASE, THE TITANS AND I ARE *OLD FRIENDS.* WE GET ALONG JUST *FINE,* THANK YOU.

AND IF YOU'RE DONE BEING *SARCASTIC,* WE HAVE *WORK* TO DO.

YOU'RE RIGHT, HARPER, WE *DO.*

HARPER'S ON *LOAN* TO US AS A *CIVILIAN EXPERT.* HE'S A LIAISON BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

CHASE IS COOPERATING WITH THE *FEDERAL* GOVERNMENT ON THIS CASE, TITANS.

A LARGE DRUG SHIPMENT HAS ENTERED THE STATES AND IS HEADING INTO THIS *CITY.*

WE HAVE TO FIND OUT THE POINT OF ENTRY AND *HOW* IT'S GETTING TO THE SUPPLIERS.

YOU *ALONE* ON THIS, HARPER?

AS A *CIVILIAN?* YEAH. BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS *DOZENS* OF AGENTS ON THIS CASE.

I CAN HELP YOU. I *KNOW* THAT POINT OF ENTRY.

BUT I'M *NOT* GOING TO TELL YOU WHERE IT IS.

INTERLUDE

HIS NAME IS *T.C. BEANE* AND HE IS FROM EL PASO, TX....

FIVE LOUSY *BUCKS*? THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE? *SHOOT!*

WASTE OF TIME, MAN. STINKIN' WASTE OF *TIME.*

YOU LOOKIN' FOR *BIG* MONEY, PAL?

HEY, WATCH WHO YOU *SNEAK UP* ON, BOY.

CALM DOWN, M'MAN. SYLVESTER, YOU EXPLAIN IT FOR ME.

YOU CAN MAKE *BIG BUCKS*, FRIEND. C'MON AND JOIN US. YOU'LL *LOVE* IT.

YEAH? WE'LL *SEE* 'BOUT THAT.

HER NAME IS *JEANMARIE ROBBINS* FROM SILVER SPRINGS, MD....

GOD, THAT *HURT.* STOMACH'S KILLIN' ME.

YOUR *PIMP* DO THAT TO YOU, GIRL?

HUH? WHO ARE *YOU*? LOOK, EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT, *REALLY* IT IS.

DON'T *JIVE* ME, GIRL. NOT WHEN I CAN *HELP* YOU.

C'MON, FOLLOW ME AND YOU WON'T *REGRET* IT.

UHH, OK... OKAY...

HIS NAME IS *ARNIE PETOWSKI* FROM PITTSBURGH, PA....

WOW, I MADE IT. *NOW* WHERE DO I GO?

HUH? WHO ARE *YOU*?

HOW 'BOUT SOMEPLACE REAL *BIG*, KID...SOFT BEDS WITH NO BUGS.

FRIENDS CALL ME *SLY.* C'MON WITH ME.

GREAT. ONLY, CAN I *EAT* FIRST? I'M HUNGRY. *REAL HUNGRY.*

AND SO IT GOES...

7

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, KID?

I'M NOT TELLING UNLESS YOU TAKE ME *WITH* YOU.

MY *BROTHER* WAS KILLED. I WANT *IN* ON THIS.

FORGET IT, KID. NOW, HERE'S WHAT WE *DO*, ROBIN...

RAVEN, DO YOU REMEMBER THAT YOUNG GIRL, *LIZZIE*?

OF COURSE.

SHE'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO *SPEAK* TO YOU.

8

ELIZABETH?

RAVEN? OH, GOD, RAVEN, I *HATE* IT HERE.

ARE THEY *MEAN* TO YOU?

EVER SINCE *MOM* RAN OFF, HE'S BEEN SO *STRANGE*. I WANT TO GO BACK, ONLY I'M *SCARED*.

AT *YOUR* AGE, ELIZABETH, YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE TO *WORRY* ABOUT SUCH THINGS.

YOU ARE A *GOOD* PERSON. YOU ARE A *STRONG* PERSON.

DO WHAT YOU *KNOW* IS BEST. SPEAK *STRONGLY* AND YOUR WORDS CAN LEVEL THE MIGHTIEST OF *MOUNTAINS*.

LIZZIE RISES, FEELING AN INNER WARMTH THAT SHE HAS NOT FELT FOR MANY MONTHS...

OH, NO--THEY'RE GREAT, EVERYTHING'S *GOOD*. I MEAN I REALLY *HATE* NEW YORK.

I WANT TO GO *HOME*, BUT MY DAD...

YOU DIDN'T *SEE* HIM WHEN I TOLD HIM I WAS *PREGNANT*. HE NEARLY BIT MY *HEAD* OFF, RAVEN.

FEEL YOUR *STRENGTH*, ELIZABETH.

...WHILE RAVEN ALLOWS HERSELF AN UNCHARACTERISTIC SMILE.

AT TIMES EMPATHY IS HER *CURSE*, BUT NOW, AT THIS MOMENT, IT IS A HEART-FULFILLING *BLESSING*.

THE PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL IS TWO BLOCKS AWAY. BY MORNING, SHE COULD BE *HOME*.

AS SHE WALKS, LIZZIE *SHUDDERS*. FOR THREE HORRIBLE WEEKS, SHE HAD STOOD ON CORNERS LIKE THIS ONE, CALLING TO HORRIBLE MEN SHE NORMALLY WOULD NEVER EVEN *LOOK* AT.

SHE'D *SMILE*, THEY'D SHOW HER CASH, THEN SHE WOULD GET SO COLD AND WET AND SCARED SHE'D *RUN*.

GOD, SHE WANTS TO GO *HOME*.

HEY, BABY, LIZZIE...WOW, GOOD CATCHIN' UP WITH YOU, HONEY. WHERE YOU *BEEN*, GIRL?

RONDO?

PLEASE, RONDO, DON'T *HIT* ME AGAIN.

HIT YOU, BEAUTIFUL? YOU GOT ME *WRONG*, HONEY. RONDO *LOVES* YA, BABY.

YOUR OLD MAN KICKS YOUR BUTT OUT AND IT WAS *RONDO* WHO TOOK YOU IN.

WHO GAVE YOU *FOOD*, BEAUTIFUL? WHO GAVE YOU *CLOTHES*, BABY?

WHO SAYS YOU'S THE *MEANEST*-LOOKIN' MOMMA IN TOWN, HONEY?

I JUST WANT TO GO *HOME*, RONDO. I CAN'T DO IT WITH THOSE *GUYS* ANYMORE.

WHO'S *ASKIN'* YOU TO TURN TRICKS, HONEY?

YOU'RE *BEAUTIFUL*, BABY, JUST BEAUTIFUL.

JUST GOT ONE LITTLE *JOB*, BABY, ONE LITTLE JOB, HONEY, AND I'LL *BUY* YOU THAT TICKET HOME.

C'MON, BEAUTIFUL, RONDO LOVES YA, BABY. *RONDO LOVES YA!*

C'MON, PAUL, YOU KNOW THIS IS *DANGEROUS*. AND IF YOU DON'T WANT WHAT HAPPENED TO *MIKE* TO HAPPEN TO *OTHER* KIDS, YOU'LL HELP US OUT.

NO. I WANT *IN*.

KID, DON'T MAKE THIS HARDER THAN IT *HAS* TO BE. I CAN DO THINGS YOU WON'T *LIKE*.

I WANT THAT *ADDRESS*. PLAIN AND SIMPLE.

NOW, WILL YOU *TELL* ME, OR DO I HAVE TO--

WAIT. GIVE ME A MOMENT.

PAUL CANNOT HIDE HIS *SECRETS* FROM *ME*.

HOLD IT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? *DON'T!*

AND SHORTLY...

I'LL CONTACT ALL THE *AUTHORITIES*. WE'LL MOVE IN AT ONCE.

GOOD. WE'LL ALL *MEET* THERE AT ELEVEN TONIGHT.

EXCUSE ME, ROBIN. IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO GO *WITH* YOU.

WELL, ROY, NORMALLY WE DON'T WORK WITH *CIVILIANS*, BUT IN *YOUR* CASE, I GUESS WE CAN MAKE AN *EXCEPTION*. C'MON.

10

TITANS TOWER, SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...

"CIVILIANS"? YOU REALLY KNOW HOW TO *TROWEL* IT ON, DICK.

WELL, WHAT DID YOU *WANT* ME TO SAY, ROY? "YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME BECAUSE YOU USED TO BE *ONE* OF US"?

MAN, IT'S GOOD *SEEING* YOU AGAIN, PAL. WHAT'VE YOU BEEN *UP* TO?

THIS AND THAT, KEEPING *BUSY*. THIS TOWER IS *INCREDIBLE*, DICK.

WE SHOULD HAVE HAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS IN THE *OLD DAYS*.

YOU STILL PRACTICE PLAYING *ROBIN HOOD*?

NOT AS MUCH AS I'D *LIKE*, BUT I'M STILL AS GOOD AS I *EVER* WAS.

THERE! NOW TELL ME. IN THIS DAY AND AGE DO YOU THINK *SPEEDY* STILL HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A *MAJOR SUPER-HERO*?

YOU CUT A MEAN *COSTUME*, MR. HARPER.

COMING FROM *YOU*, MR. GRAYSON, THAT IS A DEFINITE *COMPLIMENT*.

IT IS GOOD *MEETING* YOU AT LAST. I HAVE HEARD MUCH *ABOUT* YOU.

AND I'M CERTAINLY GLAD TO MEET *YOU*, RAVEN.

IF YOU'RE NOT *DOING* ANYTHING AFTER THIS BUST...

WHOA. *SLOW DOWN*, ROMEO. I SEE YOU'RE THE SAME AS *EVER*.

BELIEVE IT, PAL. REMEMBER, THEY DIDN'T CALL ME *SPEEDY* FOR NOTHING.

=SIGH!= THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE *SAME*.

C'MON, LET'S GET *MOVING*.

THE T-JET SCREAMS INTO THE NIGHT...

WHILE...

YOU *HEARD* ME. I WANT *IN* ON THIS. YEAH, I KNOW, HALL--YOU'VE TOLD ME A *MILLION TIMES*--"D.A.S GET INVOLVED *AFTER* THE CRIME IS COMMITTED."

MAYBE *THAT'S* WHY OUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM'S GONE TO HELL LIKE--

PLEASE COME WITH ME.

YOU GOTTA COME. IT'S ELLIE. SHE'S BEEN *HURT.*

ELLIE? YOU MEAN *MRS. CORBEN?*

WHAT *HAPPENED?*

I DON'T *KNOW.* I JUST FOUND HER IN HER OFFICE, ALL CRUMPLED OVER LIKE SHE WAS *SICK.*

MRS. CORBEN, WHAT IS *WRONG?*

SHE WAS *PUSHED... PAUL* DID IT.

NO, NO...

HE DIDN'T *MEAN* TO. HE WANTED TO GO WITH YOU AND THE TITANS. I TRIED TO *STOP* HIM.

HE PUSHED ME ASIDE AND *RAN OFF.*

DAMN THAT KID. HE'LL WIND UP AS *DEAD* AS HIS BROTHER.

WE'VE GOT TO MOVE--*FAST!*

ELSEWHERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF A FULL MOON, A SMALL SHIP SLIPS THROUGH A SHADOW-STREWN HARBOR. ITS CARGO: *TWO HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS IN DRUGS.*

12

YOU SEE IT OUT THERE?

IT'S BEAUTIFUL, MAN. I CAN ALREADY *FEEL* THE CASH.

JUST REMEMBER OSLO. *THAT* WAS A SURE BET, TOO.

YOU GOT IT, MAN. LET'S MAKE SURE THERE AIN'T ANY *SCREW-UPS.*

YOU TALKING LIKE THAT TO *ME,* BOY?

HEY! I DIDN'T *MEAN* ANY-THING.

PUNK! YOU'VE BEEN ACTING PRETTY HIGH ON THE HOG SINCE YOU *GOT* HERE. RUBBIN' ELBOWS WITH THE BIG BOYS GIVE YOU *DELUSIONS,* PUNK?

MR. SCARAPELLI, TELL THESE GUYS TO *LET GO* OF ME. I'M YOUR *RIGHT-HAND MAN,* AIN'T I?

HEY! HE'S STARTING TO GET *ROUGH.*

BOY, YOU DON'T KNOW THE *MEANING* OF ROUGH.

DON'T NEED NO LIP FROM NO WISE-MOUTH *PUNK.*

GOBEL, TEACH HIM A *LESSON.*

HEY, WAIT! I DIDN'T *KNOW.* I WON'T SAY ANYTHING AGAIN. LEMME GO, *PLEASE.*

WE WILL. SOON ENOUGH.

13

C'MON, GET MOVING. JOIN THE *OTHERS.*

YEAH.

YOU'RE GOING TO *HURT* HIM?

SHORTLY...

OKAY, I WANT YOU KIDS TO UNDERSTAND ME. THIS ISN'T NO *GAME* WE'RE PLAYING HERE.

GET BACK THERE AND *SHUT UP.*

IT'S A *JOB.* YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU AND IN THREE HOURS YOU EACH MAKE A *C-NOTE.*

ONE HUNDRED BUCKS FOR ONE NIGHT. NOT *BAD.*

YOU TRY TO *RUN,* OR YOU TRY TO *STEAL* THE PACKAGES, OR DO ANYTHING JUST A LITTLE BIT *WRONG--*

--YOU'RE *DEAD MEAT* HANGIN' ON A HOOK IN SOME GOD-FORSAKEN MORGUE.

IT'S NOT HARD, YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET CAUGHT. YOU'RE JUST DELIVERIN' A LITTLE *PRESENT.*

EACH OF YOU TO A *DIFFERENT ADDRESS.*

14

THE DRUGS BEING MOVED HERE ARE POTENTIALLY QUITE *DEADLY.*

USED IMPROPERLY, THEY WILL *KILL.*

NOT THAT IT MATTERS ONE DAMN *BIT* TO THESE MEN.

TO *THEM*, THESE YOUNG LIVES ARE AS MEANINGLESS AS THE *CIGARETTE STUBS* THEY GRIND INTO THE GROUND.

ALL THAT MATTERS IS THE ENORMOUS *PROFIT* THEY WILL MAKE.

YOU EACH GOT AN *ADDRESS*, RIGHT? NO ONE TALKS TO ANYONE *ELSE*. YOU DON'T SHOW YOUR ADDRESS TO THE KID NEXT TO YOU.

BUT, JUST THEN...

THERE IS NO SOUND OR SMELL TO HERALD HER SUDDEN APPEARANCE, JUST SMOKE APPEARING WITH THE SUDDENNESS OF THOUGHT.

RAVEN, MISTRESS OF MYSTICISM, HAS MOVED THROUGH THE DIMENSIONAL BARRIERS, DRAWN BY THE SENSE OF SOMETHING QUITE...

THAT WAY IF THERE'S TROUBLE YOU CAN SAY YOU DON'T KNOW *NOTHIN'* AND YOU'D BE TELLIN' THE *TRUTH.*

THEN THE COPS *WON'T* HOLD YOU, RIGHT? YOU'LL BE *FREE*, RIGHT?

EVERYONE LINE UP.

YOU GET *FIFTEEN BAGS* EACH.

...*SICK*. DEATH HANGS HEAVILY IN THE AIR...

...AND IT FAIRLY DRIVES THE YOUNG EMPATH *MAD!*

15

WHO IS SHE?

I DON'T CARE. KILL HER!

NO! YOU WON'T GET A CHANCE.

I WON'T LET YOU.

SKREEE

I--I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

I THOUGHT THEY ONLY FOUGHT THINGS FROM OUTER SPACE!

WRONG, CREEP. WE'RE AFTER TRASH LIKE YOU-- WHO WOULD POISON THE WHOLE WORLD IF YOU COULD MAKE A BUCK.

FORGET THE CHATTER, ARCHER. TRASH 'EM!

I KNEW CRUD LIKE THESE WHEN I WAS GROWING UP.

THEY'RE THE LOWEST FORM OF SCUM TO EVER WALK THE EARTH.

PAL, NORMALLY I'D SUGGEST YOU'D SURRENDER JUST TO SAVE YOURSELVES THE BEATING...

16

...BUT NOT *THIS* TIME.

I *WANT* YOU TO FEEL THE PAIN YOU ENJOY INFLICTING ON OTHERS.

SKAK!

HOW MANY KIDS HAVE YOU MADE *SUFFER* BECAUSE OF THE *GARBAGE* YOU BRING INTO THIS COUNTRY?

POOM!

THEY'RE DROPPING LIKE *LEAD FLIES*, ROBBIE.

YEAH. I NOTICE, PAL. GOOD SHOOTING.

SHUCKS, 'TIS NOTHIN' ANYONE ELSE EQUIPPED WITH A *BOXING GLOVE ARROW* AND YEARS OF PRACTICE COULDN'T DO.

WH-WHAT'S THAT *SHADOW* COMIN' AT US?

NOTHIN' YOU'RE GONNA *LIKE*, SLIME-BREATH!

CYBORG, LET ME DEAL WITH THESE MEN *MY* WAY.

FOOM

SURE, RAVEN. YOU LAY 'EM DOWN *GENTLE*. ME, I GOT *OTHER* IDEAS.

THIS TURKEY'LL BE SINGING *SOPRANO* TILL HE COLLECTS *SOCIAL SECURITY!*

WHY ARE YOU TAKING US *AWAY* FROM THE FIGHT, WONDER GIRL?

OH, THE OTHERS CAN HANDLE A FEW *GOONS*, STARFIRE.

I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE A CHANCE TO *REALLY* SHOW YOUR STUFF.

17

I'LL HANDLE THE *SUPPLY* BOAT.

WHY DON'T *YOU* TAKE CARE OF THEIR *EUROPEAN* FRIENDS?

BAM

BAM

ANADETTE

BAM

OUR BULLETS ARE BOUNCING OFF HER *BRACELETS!*

YOU *GOT* IT, PAL.

SPING

SPING

YOUR *TOY GUNS* ARE AS USELESS AS *YOU* ARE!

GO AHEAD, STARFIRE-- *DO IT!*

SPAMM!

I'VE NEVER TRIED USING MY *STARBOLT* POWERS LIKE THIS BEFORE, BUT I THINK I CAN *DO* IT.

FOCUSING A CONSTANT *WEDGE* OF ENERGY BEFORE ME, I CAN SMASH THROUGH THIS SHIP LIKE A DRILL THROUGH *PAPER!*

WHOOM!

18

T.C., WHAT DO WE *DO* NOW?

DO, MAN? WHO GIVES A BLOODY DAMN 'BOUT *ANYTHIN'* NOW?

YOU SEE WHAT'S *OUT* THERE, MAN?

THE *STUFF*, KID ... *FOOD*, MAN. ENOUGH FOR A WHOLE DAMN *LIFE!*

IT'S *WAITIN'* FOR ME, MAN. IT'S *ALL MINE.*

JEEZ! THAT KID'S GOING AFTER THE *COKE.*

NO WAY... *NO WAY!*

BAM!

HIS NAME WAS T.C. BEANE FROM EL PASO, TEXAS. HE WAS *FIFTEEN.*

YOU *SCUM!* YOU LIKE PLAYIN' WITH YOUR *TOYS*, HUH, MAN?

YOU LIKE *BEATIN' UP* ON GUYS, DON'T YOU?

NO MORE, MAN... *NO MORE!* IT'S *ALL OVER* NOW.

ALL OVER FOR *BOTH* OF US.

COULD RUN. PROB'LY GET AWAY, TOO. RIGHT, CHIEF?

YEAH, *COULD* RUN.

NAH.

I THINK I'LL SIT HERE AND *WAIT.*

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD!

19

HURRY, CHILDREN... MOVE QUICKLY OUT OF HARMS WAY.
THERE IS STILL DANGER HERE.
RAVEN. HOLD IT-- INTERNAL AMPLIFIER'S PICKIN' UP SOMETHIN' --BEHIND US!
WATCH OU--
ARGGHH!
BAM!
BAM!
SLY! MAN, C'MON, DON'T YOU DIE ON ME, TOO.
DO SOMETHIN' TO HIM. DO SOMETHING!
I... CANNOT.
I AM NOT ...GOD!
MANY YEARS AGO, VICTOR STONE, KNOWN NOW AS CYBORG, ALSO RAN AWAY.
HE UNDERSTANDS THE PAIN, THE HELPLESSNESS AND THE HOPELESSNESS.
AND HE CRIES.
HIS NAME WAS SYLVESTER JOHNSON. FROM CLEARWATER, FLORIDA. HE WAS THIRTEEN.
20

OH, GOD... NO PLACE TO *RUN.*

COPS ARE *EVERYWHERE.*

LOOK! *THERE'S* ONE OF THEM NOW.

WATCH IT. HE HAS A *RIFLE.*

SHOOT!

WE *CAN'T,* SIR. WE HAVE *RULES!*

N-NO... I'M *NOT* GOING. YOU HEAR ME. I'M NOT--

13 PCT

LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPON. WE HAVE YOU SURROUNDED!

YOU'RE *NOT* DOIN' NOTHIN', CREEP.

SPAMF!

I'M HOLDING EVERYTHING IN, MAN, BUT I AM *VERY* ANGRY.

AND, VERY QUIETLY, VERY EFFICIENTLY, I AM GOING TO TAKE MY ANGER OUT ON *YOU!*

UNDERSTAND?

SPOOOOOOOOM!

IS HE DEAD?

NO.

SHAME, CYBORG. HE *DESERVED* TO DIE.

I'M *NOT* GONNA ARGUE, CHASE. THE WAY I FEEL, I MIGHT FIND MYSELF *AGREEING* WITH YOU.

AND MISTER, THAT SCARES ME *SPITLESS!*

21

CAPTAIN HALL, I FOUND THIS ONE TRYING TO *DRIVE* AWAY.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, A $90,000 ROLLS ROYCE IS NOW FIT FOR THE *JUNK PILE!*

WELL, WELL, ANTHONY SCARAPELLI. I HAVE A *FILE* ON YOU SO THICK IT COULD CHOKE A *DINOSAUR.*

MR. SCARAPELLI, LET *ME* DRIVE YOU... *DOWNTOWN.*

YOU GOT *NOTHIN'* ON ME.

I'LL BE *FREE* IN AN HOUR.

SPEEDY, IS HE...?

I'M AFRAID *SO,* STARFIRE.

LOTSA *FUN,* WASN'T IT?

DAMN!

COME ON.

YEAH, I'M GOIN'.

DON'T WORRY.

OH, GOD, RAVEN... I'M *SO* SORRY. I DIDN'T KNOW *WHAT* TO DO.

EVERYTHING WILL BE *FINE,* DARLING... DO NOT WORRY. ALL WILL BE...?

PARDON ME, ELIZABETH. I SENSE...

...SOMETHING *FAMILIAR.*

PAUL.

I GOT HERE WHEN ALL THE *FIGHTING* BEGAN.

I... WAS SO SCARED. I COULDN'T DO *ANY-THING.*

Y'KNOW, I CAME HERE TO FIND OUT *WHY* MIKE DIED. I THOUGHT IT WOULD MAKE ME *FEEL* BETTER.

GOD, I FEEL SO *SICK* INSIDE.

THEN YOU MUST WORK TO MAKE CERTAIN SUCH THINGS DO NOT HAPPEN *AGAIN.*

COME. TAKE MY HAND. WE MUST *GO.*

YOUR BROTHER AND OTHERS LIKE HIM FACE PRIVATE DEVILS EACH DAY OF THEIR LIVES. WE *ALL* DO.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US ARE IN *HOW* WE FIGHT WHAT WE MOST FEAR.

22

EPILOGUE

GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA...

PAUL! WHERE WERE YOU?

WE WERE WORRIED SICK!

I HADDA FIND OUT ABOUT MIKE.

I JUST COULDN'T REST UNTIL I DID.

MOM, DAD... GOD, I'M GLAD I'M HOME...

GOD, I AM SO GLAD!

SKOKIE, ILLINOIS...

DADDY, I CAME HOME. I WANT TO...

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT, LIZZIE. I TOLD YOU BEFORE.

YOU GOT YOURSELF PREGNANT.

YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN!

I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

OH, DADDY... OH, GOD... PLEASE...

PLEASE!

LANGLEY, VIRGINIA...

YOU COME RIGHT BACK HERE, YOUNG MAN!

NO, I WON'T. YOU CAN'T MAKE ME.

HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT?

I'LL SAY WHATEVER I WANNA. YOU GOT THAT?

WHILE YOU'RE UNDER MY ROOF, YOU DO WHAT I SAY.

THEN I'M GOIN'. I'M GOIN'!

OH, NO... I'M SORRY...DON'T!

AND SO IT GOES.

23

NEXT ISSUE: TERRA! SHE'S ANOTHER NAME FOR TERROR!